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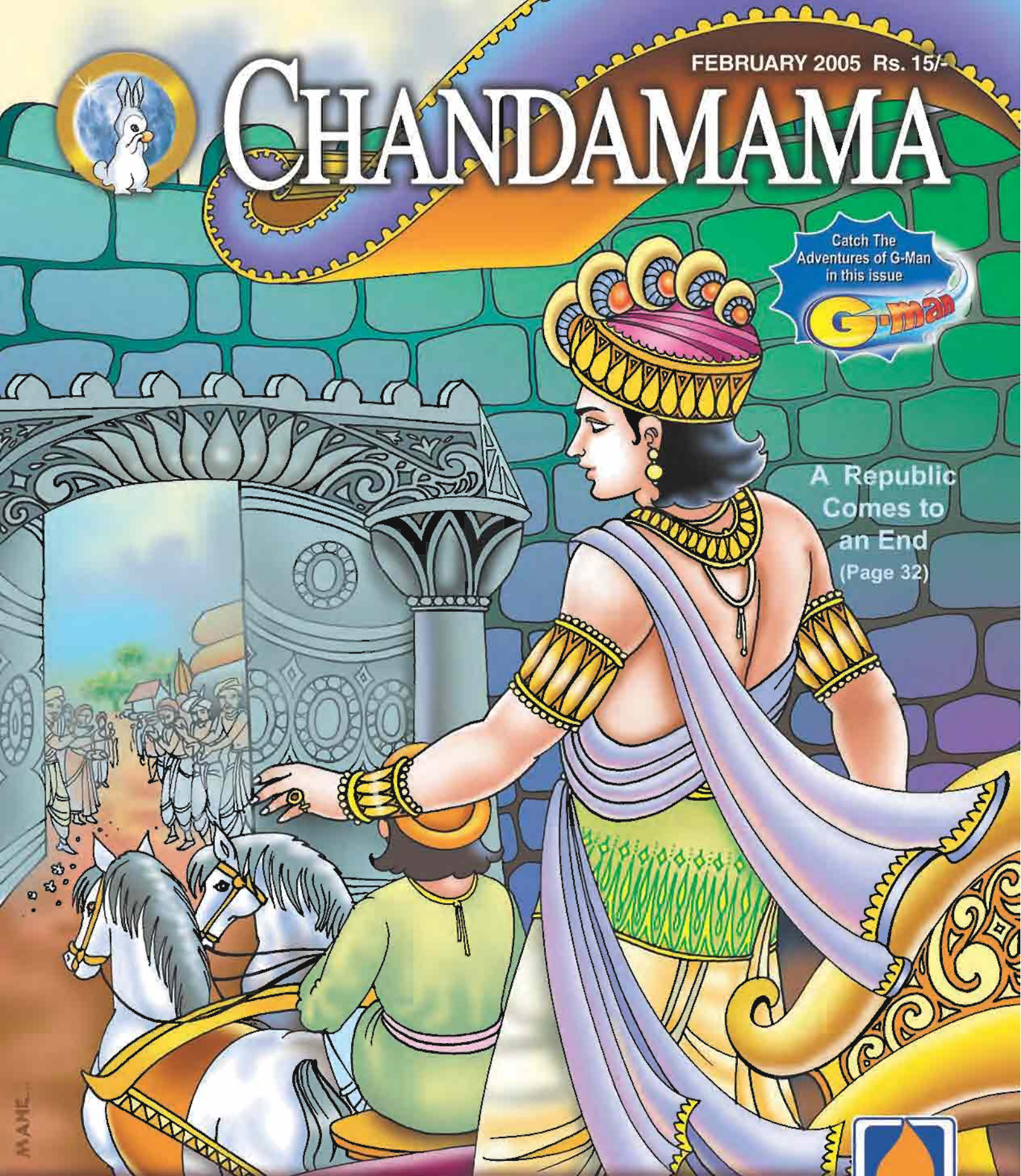
CHANDAMAMA



Catch The
Adventures of G-Man
in this issue

G-man

A Republic
Comes to
an End
(Page 32)



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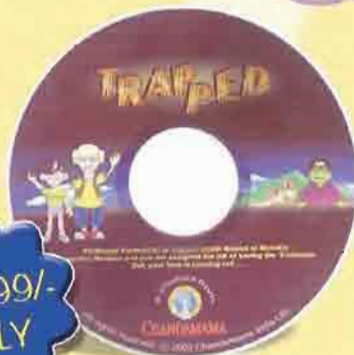
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HURRY!

THE ADVENTURES OF G-man



**MIND
RAIDER**
PART 1



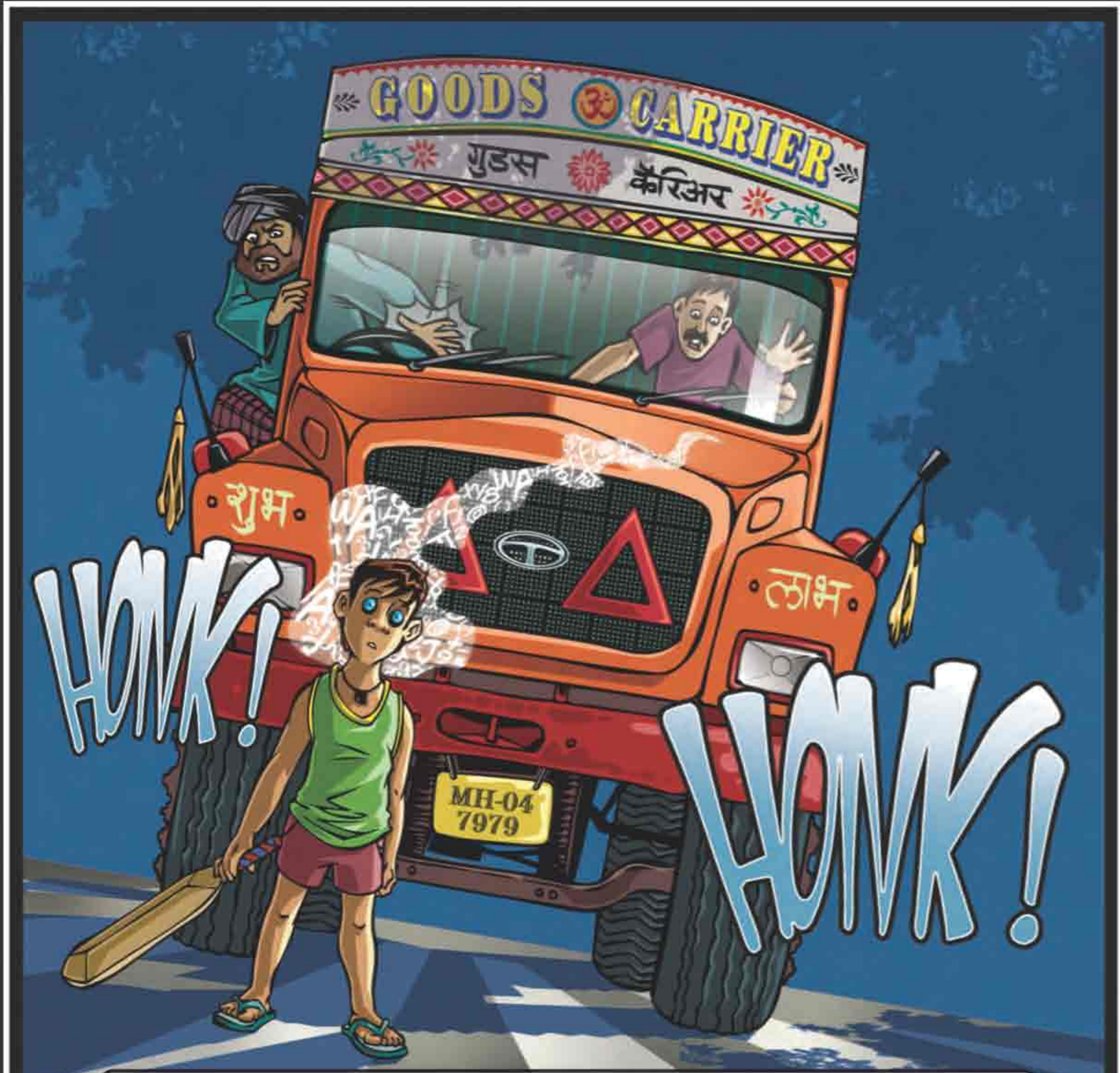
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It's that same blank look everywhere. Across the world.



POWER SUPPLY FOR **G-man**



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Somewhere in an abandoned mill

Terrolene's evil base.

Ha ha ha!
I can feel myself
grow younger.

The
Mind Raider is
working better
than I
expected.

Terrolene's machine
can convert the thoughts
and consciousness of children
into energy that will make him immortal.

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And he has the telepathic powers of Neuraal on his side.
Looting little heads of their vital power.



Great job
Neuraal!
Soon I'll regain
my lost youth
forever.



And I'll have
my revenge on
G-man.

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NEURAAL

Neuraal was once Dr. Narad Munaal—a promising scientist in the communication division of Indian army.

In his obsessive quest to advance his research in thought transference, he implanted a transmitter in his own brain... Trying to harness the power of telepathy.



He gained amazing mental powers—stealing thoughts, altering consciousness, mass hypnotism—but all at the cost of his sanity. The army disowned him, leaving him a neurotic psychopath.

Once before, G-man's G-forces defeated him. He was exiled to a distant black hole—where nothing, not light, nor thoughts can escape.

Did the black hole collapse? Or did Terrolene free him? Whatever it was, Neuraal is back in action, and this time he seeks his revenge on G-man.

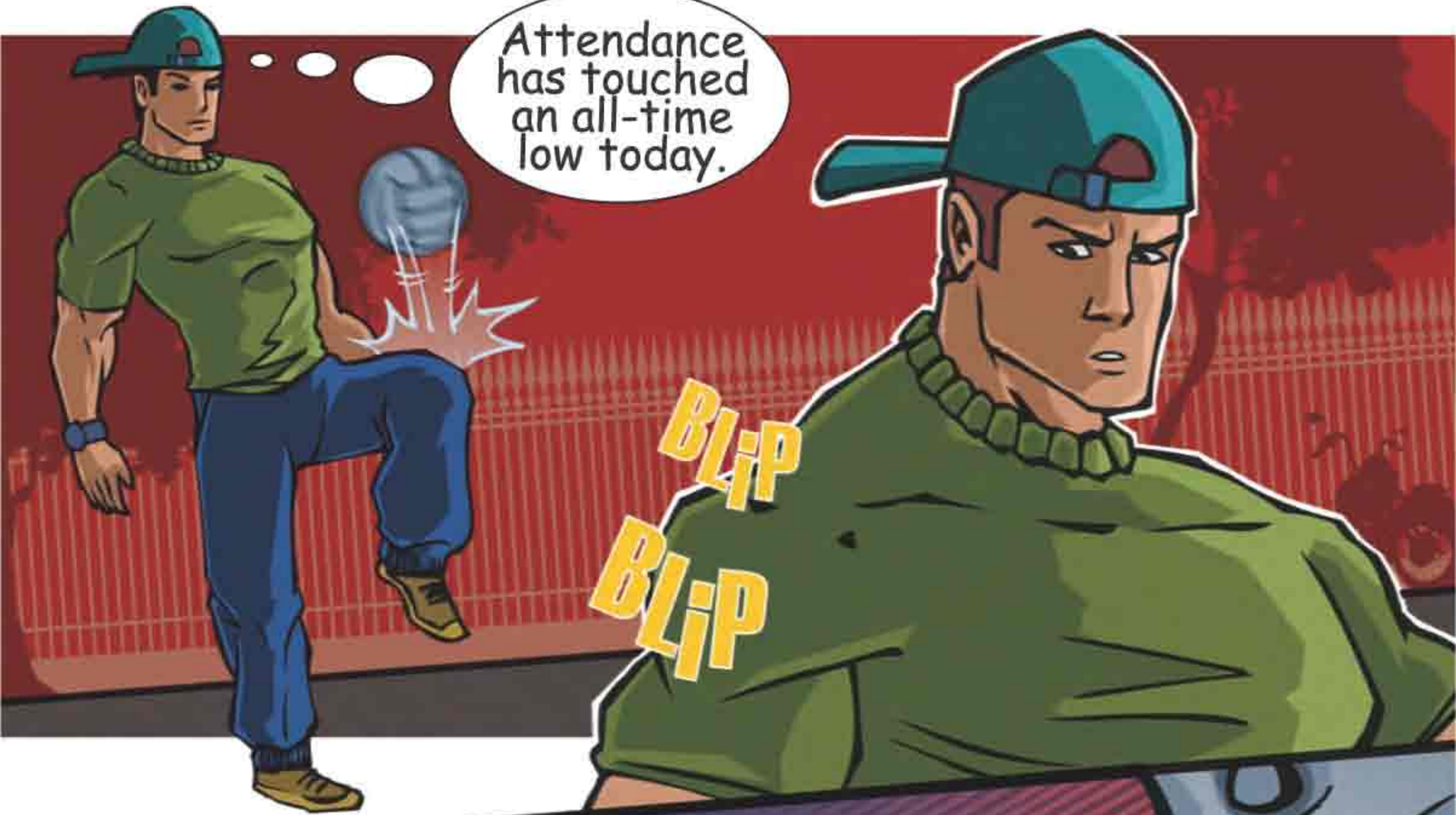


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Major Suryaraj is concerned.



Major, Terrolene is up to his tricks again. He is turning children into zombies everywhere. Stealing their thoughts to power his new youth machine. Aah yes, your old friend Neuraal is back, and helping Terrolene this time.



I hate these reunions.

Looks like a job for G-man.



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Suryaraj eats his favourite energy food, a pack of PARLE-G.

Legend has it that Suryaraj absorbs light for a fraction of a second from the sun before he becomes the G-man.

That probably explains why it gets dark for a second. And why no one can see the transformation.



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G-man transforms into a ball of fire and takes off.

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I hate
gate crashing
your party,
but I misplaced
my invite.

Pity!
Or you would
have got the
dress code
right.

But it's
always a
pleasure meeting
you, G-man.

Neuraal
please make
our guest
comfortable.

POWER SUPPLY FOR



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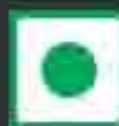




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Can G-man escape Neuraal's zombie kid army? Can he foil Terrolene's evil plan? Will children be able to think for themselves again? Find out in the final issue of Mind Raider.

Fun Center

cream Biscuits

What games are the Fun Centre sporty characters playing?

Bourbon

Butterscotch

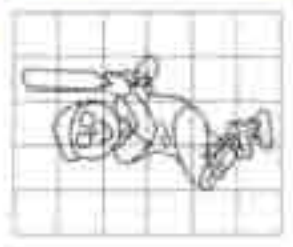
Milk

Strawberry

G	N	I	L	C	O	Y	C	C	O	Y
I	N	G	F	O	C	L	C	A	B	E
F	O	O	T	B	L	A	L	I	T	Z
L	O	P	E	S	M	T	A	K	S	T
Q	U	G	N	I	D	A	G	H	I	B
L	M	C	N	D	C	A	K	E	T	C
A	C	R	I	C	M	O	C	E	T	E
P	Q	E	S	R	B	T	B	A	L	L
A	S	T	E	R	I	N	A	L	L	L
B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L	L

Unscramble these words to find the new exciting flavours of Parle Fun Center

U B O O R B N
H R T T Q B T S U C E E
W R R R B A B Y T E
K I M L



Enlarge the drawing in the space provided below.





Fun Center

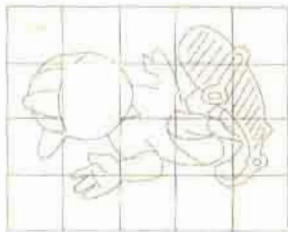
cream biscuits

Which of the 3 drawings completes the picture?

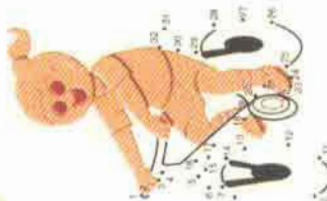


Answer: A

Which piece will complete the picture?



Join the dots and complete the picture.



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LET US PRAY

The Tamil poet Elango Adigal, in his epic *Silappadhikaram*, written more than two thousand years ago, mentions of "waves as high as mountains touching the dark clouds".

Was he referring to the tidal waves which swallowed the flourishing city of Poompuhar and which we now know as tsunami? This word of Japanese origin means harbour (*tsu*) and wave (*nami*). The giant waves that struck the coasts of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Myanmar, Maldives, Sri Lanka, the Andamans and other parts of India, from Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu to Kerala on the west coast, played havoc with approximately 200,000 lives, with thousands of others either missing or maimed and rendered homeless.

An undersea earthquake of such magnitude as 8.9 on the Richter scale off the coast of Sumatra, an island of Indonesia, triggered the tsunami to travel at a high speed like 1,000 km per hour and to distances such as 1,800–2,800km, catching people unawares. For example, Christmas revellers at many places on the long stretch of sandy beaches touching the Bay of Bengal had come out in large numbers on the morning of December 26. Children were in a playful mood.

Except for the few who had not ventured to get their feet wet and managed to flee from the giant dark waves that had suddenly made their appearance, all others were sucked into the sea. Fisherfolk along the coast and their huts were swept away lock, stock and barrel—boats and fishing nets not excluded. Thousands of them met with watery graves.

Words are inadequate to describe the wholesale destruction of people, property and places. On a rough estimate, more than one-third of those who lost their lives were children—whatever their age. Grieving over their deaths has constraints.

Our hearts must, therefore, go to thousands of those who have survived but have been orphaned and injured, deprived of their homesteads and denied of hopes to live till rehabilitation efforts can reach them. They will find only in our ardent prayers the promise of a future. **- Publisher**



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CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

November 20, 1989 was a red letter day for children the world over. The UN General Assembly that day adopted the Convention of the Rights of the Child. It was ratified by as many as 192 countries in the years that followed.

What constitute the Rights of Children? Of primary importance is Health. They have a right to live a healthy life. It does not mean that they do not fall ill. However, whatever possible to prevent illness should be the concern of parents as long as their children live with them. In the event of illness, they should get proper healthcare. This has to be ensured by doctors and hospitals where parents take their wards for treatment.

Next in importance is Education. Many countries offer free education up to certain stages. As an extra incentive to those children who show promise, they extend facilities like scholarships, concession in fees, recognition of excellence in studies and their behaviour while in school. A liberal education can be had not only from text-books and classroom lectures but on the playfield where children are trained in organised sports and games. It will be the responsibility of both the teachers and school to see that students do not drop out midway in the academic year which, apart from other factors, can demoralise the teachers as well as the taught.

Present day children have better opportunities to watch life around them, especially in their own homes where parents face problems of a myriad nature. They must take children into confidence and discuss the problems with them so that they are not taken by surprise when parents take certain decisions which might affect children in their immediate or later lives. Related to this right is the right of children to express their opinion and for parents to listen to it. They should avoid imposing their opinion on children.

Other important rights are protection from ill-treatment, from exploitation and from forced labour. It is only proper that when children are made aware of their rights, they are reminded of their duties, too. Leading them is the need for them to reciprocate their parents' love and affection and concern for their welfare. Children learn the first lessons of discipline in the classrooms and when they belong to their alma mater. It is in the hallowed precincts of the school that they take their first steps to become responsible citizens.

In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.
We must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we will all hang separately.

- Benjamin Franklin

A person is led to reap the fruits of his own actions, as if impelled by a hurricane.
Those that are empty minded cannot be benefited by instruction.
What could a companion help those who lack inner content?

- Chanakya

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BE A DREAM CHILD

Soon after his address to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day last year, President Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam administered a 10-point oath to a group of children who had called on him. We invited the children of India to write a para each on the ten points. The competition concluded on August 31, 2004. Out of the hundreds of entries we received, three entries were chosen prizewinning efforts.

We congratulate the winners. - Editor

**1ST
PRIZE**

I wish to write about what I have achieved in fulfilling the 10 points:

1. As we all know, education gives us sound reasoning and the power of judgement. I have pursued my studies with concentration and dedication. I secured the third position in my class. I hope to excel myself in the days to come.
2. During April, my school in Arunachal Pradesh sent me to a nearby village, Mopaya, to teach some illiterate persons. I visited the village regularly and helped 15 children learn to read and write. Today I am happy that these children can read and write by themselves. Later, they were admitted to a school.
3. All children in my school regularly take part in 'Vanamahotsava' in our areas. I consider myself fortunate that I could plant more than ten saplings of hollock and Nahar trees.
4. When I visited Mopaya regularly, I persuaded more than six persons to give up gambling and drinking. They promised to give up those habits permanently.
5. It is my constant endeavour to help my suffering brethren. I try to help them with old clothes or by arranging monetary help for them.
6. I never discriminate people of my area on the basis of religion, caste or language. To me every human being is the son of god. No religion teaches us to hate others.
7. I earnestly believe that 'Honesty is the best policy'. In India corruption is one of the root causes for deterioration in our society. I dream of a corruption free society.
8. Education makes a man enlightened. My parents and the monks (teachers) of our school always advise us to become enlightened citizens and to make my family righteous.
9. I try to befriend the physically and mentally impaired children. Fortunately there are not many in our locality. I shall work hard to make them feel normal.
10. Like our revered President, I feel proud to be an Indian. I have a vision to see India a developed country in the near future.



Shankha Banerjee(14)

Tirap, Arunachal Pradesh



I, too, dreamt of making my Motherland a proud nation. As the proverb goes, small streams of water go a long way to make a big ocean.

1. I am earnestly trying to pursue my education with the highest dedication with the aim of excelling myself in the academic field. I could also help two students to join a school.
2. I have already started efforts to educate illiterate persons to read and write. I sought a feedback from them, and I find they are really striving to achieve a better position in life.

**2ND
PRIZE**

3. Many people in the rural areas are addicted to gambling which is playing havoc not only in their lives but their family members, too. I have taken a vow to visit at least five families and with the assistance of my parents, to wean them away from their addictions. They have promised to withdraw themselves from these addictions.
4. I have a great desire to maintain my environment clean and hygienic. Along with my friends I have planted 10 saplings in our colony.
5. I was very touched by the woes of two families who had lost their breadwinners. With the help of my parents, I arranged for their livelihood.
6. Irrespective of caste, religion or creed, I have wholeheartedly engaged myself to the cause

of the Nation and the citizens, in particular during the time of crisis.

7. I played a vital role in educating a child about honesty when he picked up currency notes from the road. I prompted the child to hand them over to the police. I was very thrilled.
8. My constant endeavour towards the citizens in particular has prompted my family, too, treading the same path.
9. Whenever I travel I voluntarily try to help the physically and mentally challenged by giving up my seat for them in buses.
10. I DREAM that my beloved motherland should always be held in high esteem. I shall proudly celebrate the success of my country and my people.

- **Ankitha A.S.(12),
Secunderabad**

3RD PRIZE

1. I strongly believe that we students should be aware of the value of education. I got the fifth position in the last final exam and made my family feel proud of me.
2. Since we get proper education in school, we can be budding teachers for those who are illiterate. I now spend time with our woman servant to read and write.
3. Plants are important as they give us oxygen and takes in carbon-dioxide, thus maintaining the balance in nature. I have planted a couple of saplings in my garden and decided to plant more saplings every year and also take care of them.
4. I was on a visit to my village and came across children using bad language. I spoke to them about great people. Later I found them to have improved their behaviour.
5. Whenever I have reasons to be sad, I used to call in my friends and spend time with them, and this makes me happy.

6. I sometimes used to go to the church or mosque to pray and I have been received with love and affection.
7. The students of our school often go for social work to free society from corruption. I have always felt happy to be part of such groups.
8. I gave away some books and clothes to the poor children who were hit by floods.
9. I visited an orphanage during my vacation and found some children who are handicapped. I gave them fruits and made them feel normal like all others.
10. I attended the *karam puja*, celebrated by the people of the tea gardens in Assam. I participated in the essay competition, where the topic was to write about the people of Assam. I was happy to get the 2nd prize, and it made me feel proud about my heritage.



- **Nibedita Mahata (13),
Dispur**

MAIL BAG



This came as a New Year card:

Personally I tell you, Chandamama.
You are the inspiration
Not only to children but adults, too.
You play different roles
And take various risks to share
knowledge, made to excel in our long journey.

- Priya Sharma

By e-mail from Oman:

I have been an avid reader of *Chandamama* from a very young age, and I have had great pleasure in introducing the magazine to my nieces and nephews, and now my children. They enjoy the magazine a lot.

Reader Rujuta Bhushan writes from Ambernath:

I like all the stories, poems and riddles in *Chandamama*. Please add more new items. There are many informative pieces in *Chandamama* for us to learn.

This came from Hemanth Jena, Baragam:

Words cannot describe how good *Chandamama* is. It is a gem of a magazine, especially for the English-learners. I started reading it three years ago. Now, it has become a part of my life. I enjoy every page of the magazine.

Bonny G.P. of Hyderabad has this to say:

The day I got promoted to class I, my Mom gifted me *Chandamama*. After that, every month my Mom brings a copy when she receives her salary. I have thus grown up with *Chandamama*, which is my best chum. I love you, *Chandamama*!

Reader E.Srinivasa Rao writes from Miryalaguda:

I have been a fan of *Chandamama* for the past five years. Kaleidoscope and Ruskin Bond's writings are simply superb.

Reader K.Harish Kumar of Chikkajogihalli writes:

Your December issue was very nice. The jokes were really enjoyable. I am very happy to read *Chandamama*.

By e-mail from Mrs Vidya Baglodi, Sharjah:

Along with my daughter, who is 8 years old, I too read *Chandamama*, as it has lots of good stories with moral values and useful information. Age is no bar to learn more, and sometimes we can learn a lot from children.



NEW TALES
OF KING
VIKRAM AND
THE VETALA

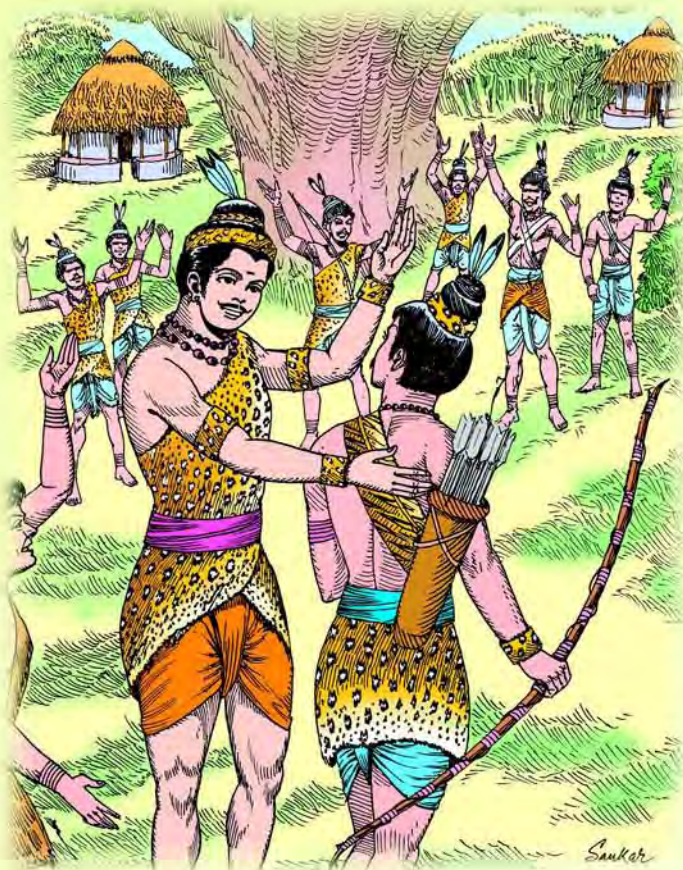
THE SELF-RESPECTING YOUTH

It was a dark, moonless night. Occasional flashes of lightning lit up the sombre scene, causing an eerie dance of jerky and frightening shadows in the cremation ground. The spine-chilling howl of a jackal or the blood-curdling laughter of some unseen evil spirit cut into the silence that hung, shroud-like, over the area. Altogether, it was a scene that would strike terror into the bravest heart. But nothing could daunt the intrepid King Vikram. Once again, he made his way to the ancient gnarled tree from which the corpse hung. Bones crunched under his feet and a screeching ghost rose from the dust in shuddering frenzy as he marched ahead.

Oblivious to all this, he reached the tree and brought down the corpse. Slinging it astride his shoulder, he had just begun his return journey when the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King! I do not know what inspires you to come to this graveyard at dead of night, braving all the danger and discomfort of such a venture! I have seen many idealistic youths who claimed willingness to lay down their very lives for the sake of their noble cause. But at the first sign of danger, they forgot all their ideals and turned into cowards! Let me tell you the story of one such youth, Giridhar."

The vampire then narrated the following story:

The valley of Bhargavgiri was inhabited by a group of tribals. Their chief, Kondadev, had a son named Giridhar who was a very self-respecting person. This was not to say that he was proud or haughty; in no way did he misuse his position as the chief's son, nor did he ever display any sign of arrogance. On the contrary, he was helpful and friendly to all. His greatest desire was for the



freedom of his homeland. Every year, competitions for archery and wrestling would be held in the valley in connection with the annual festival of the tribe's deity, Bhargavi, and the winners of these competitions would be honoured. On these occasions, Giridhar would exhort the youth of the tribe to develop valour and self-sacrifice, and to be ready to lay down their lives, if need be, for their noble cause. His stirring speeches filled them with patriotic fervour.

The valley, which was enclosed by mountains, could be entered only through a narrow path on its south. Beyond this lay the kingdom of Kanchanpur, ruled by a king named Kanakasena. From the time of Kanakasena's ancestors, Bhargavgiri was (and continued to be) a vassal of Kanchanpur. But much before that, there had once been a time when Bhargavgiri had been a free land. How and when it had been forced into vassalage, Giridhar did not know. He had repeatedly posed this question to his father and other elders of the tribe, but no one gave him a proper answer.

Finally, Giridhar met the aged priest of his tribe and pleaded with him to satisfy his curiosity. The old man

eventually relented, and told him the story. Long ago, the valley had been a virtual treasure trove of medicinal herbs of all kinds, and rare species of flora and fauna. When the news of this natural bounty reached the ears of the King of Kanchanpur, greed inspired him to send his soldiers to the valley. They persecuted the tribals and took away by force the honey, herbs and animal products they had collected. Deprived thus of their means of livelihood, the innocent tribals were in despair.

As usual, the annual festival of Bhargavi took place that year with great fanfare. The army commander of Kanchanpur and his soldiers were among the worshippers. In the course of the festival, the tribal priest was possessed by the spirit of the goddess and he went into a trance. Jumping and leaping in a frenzy, he shouted, "If you desire the welfare of your people, do as I say! On every full-moon day, you must first make me an offering of three pots of honey, 31 deer horns and three basketfuls of herbs, and then hand them over as your tribute to the soldiers of Kanchanpur. This practice should continue until the King of Kanchanpur, of his own accord, frees you from vassalage. Otherwise it will end in your ruin!"

The tribal chieftain bowed to the dictates of the goddess. From then on, Bhargavgiri was recognised as Kanchanpur's vassal. The soldiers of Kanchanpur stopped persecuting the tribals, but continued to take away all the forest produce they painstakingly collected month after month. The practice continued, and it was in this manner that the tribals had reached their present impoverished condition.

Giridhar was enraged by the story. He addressed his fellow tribals: "Why should we surrender the honey and other things, collected by us with much difficulty, to others? This forest is our home and as such, whatever grows here is our property. We should resist this injustice. If we stand united, no one can take away our rights!"

Kondadev was upset to hear his son inciting the tribals against Kanchanpur. He warned him, "Remember, my son, we are no match for the king's huge army!"

After thinking the matter over, Giridhar told his father, "Didn't the goddess say that the tribute-paying can stop when the king himself sets us free? I shall go to Kanchanpur, meet the king and tell him of the difficulties

we're facing." His father advised him to present his case humbly and courteously, so that the king would be moved to relent. Giridhar agreed. Accompanied by two friends, he set out for the capital of Kanchanpur.

On reaching his destination, he met King Kanakasena, enlightened him about the plight of the tribals, and requested him to free the valley from bondage. The king heard him out, and finally declared – "Bhargavgiri is our vassal, and is bound to obey us. If you don't wish to pay the tribute due to us, you may leave the valley and go to live elsewhere!"

"Forgive me, Your Majesty," said Giridhar politely, "but that's impossible. The valley of Bhargavgiri is our mother, and we cannot even contemplate leaving her!" He bowed and left the court.

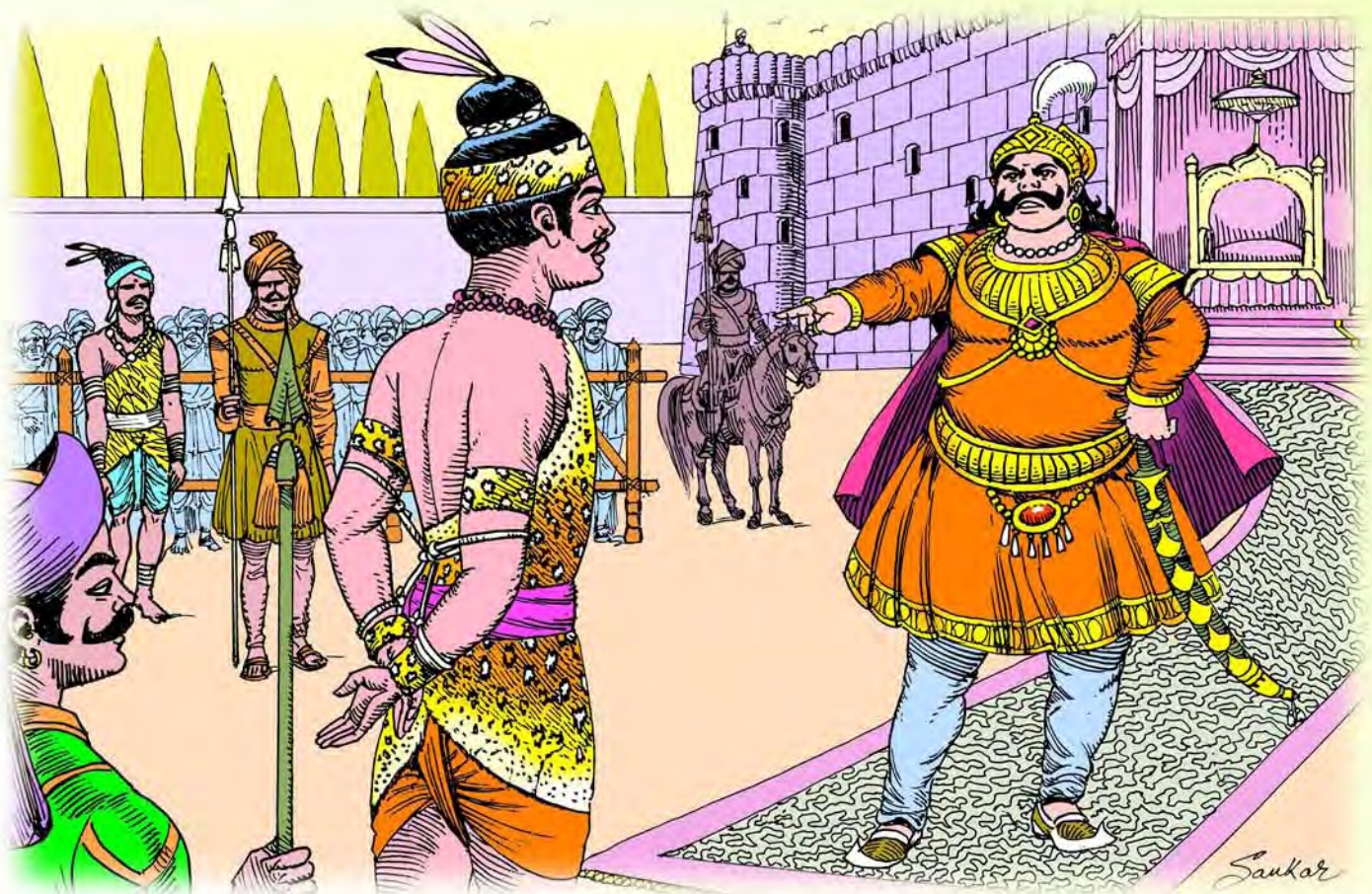
A week later, as the king was holding court, a tribal youth entered, bowed to him, and handed him a letter. It was from Giridhar, and read as follows:

"O King! My forefathers were scared by an oracle's threat and agreed to pay tribute to you. For three generations now, we have continued the practice,

undergoing much hardship in the process. We slave and slog, while you enjoy the fruits of our labour. This cannot go on any longer. I came in person to meet you and tell you of our problems, but you turned a deaf ear to my pleas. Now there is no other go but to tell you that we wish to break free of your tyranny. My men are ready to fight to the death, but I am not in favour of unnecessary bloodshed. So, I suggest an alternative. As the representative of the tribals, I am ready to fight a duel with any of your warriors. If I win, you must declare Bhargavgiri valley independent; if I lose, my people shall go away, leaving the valley to you. If you are ready to meet my challenge, kindly let me know where and when you intend to have the duel."

Boiling with anger, the king snapped at the messenger, "Very well! On the evening of the next full-moon day, the duel shall be held in the palace grounds. Tell Giridhar to be ready!"

On the next full-moon day, arrangements were made for a duel as per the king's order. Giridhar arrived at the venue, accompanied by two friends.



Something totally unexpected happened. The king's guards surrounded Giridhar, took him prisoner, and bound his hand and foot before dragging him to the king.

In a tone brimming with sarcasm, the king declared: "Giridhar, your bravery is commendable indeed! But by defying me, you have put your life in danger. You have incited the peace-loving tribals and filled their innocent minds with fiery ideas of independence and pride. Your crime is nothing short of treason. You deserve to be punished with death. But like you, I wish to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. Now that the tribals are bent on getting their freedom, it will not be easy to rule over them. So I shall set them free – on one condition."

"What is it?" asked Giridhar.

"If you desire freedom for your homeland, you should agree to give up *your* freedom. You shall remain in this palace for the rest of your life, as a slave of Kanchanpur!"

Giridhar was startled. A moment later, he bowed and said, "So be it. I willingly accept your condition!"

Having concluded the story, the vampire asked, "O

King! How could Giridhar, a proud, freedom-loving youth, so tamely agree to become a slave? Was it not his cowardice that made him abandon his ideals when confronted with adverse conditions? Answer me, or your head shall shatter into a thousand fragments!"

King Vikram replied, "Giridhar never abandoned his ideals or changed his stand. He had all along desired freedom for his tribe. In the end, he succeeded in winning it – albeit at great personal cost. He sacrificed his own freedom for that of his tribe. Sacrificing one's personal honour for that of his family, his family's honour for that of his village, his village's honour for that of his kingdom – all these are examples of truly noble deeds. Giridhar was one who made such a noble sacrifice. In no way did he prove himself a coward. On the contrary, he deserves praise for his courage and selflessness!"

As soon as the King finished speaking, the vampire, along with the corpse, moved off his shoulder with a jerk and flew back to the tree. With a little sigh, King Vikram squared his shoulders and retraced his steps towards the tree.



DID YOU KNOW?

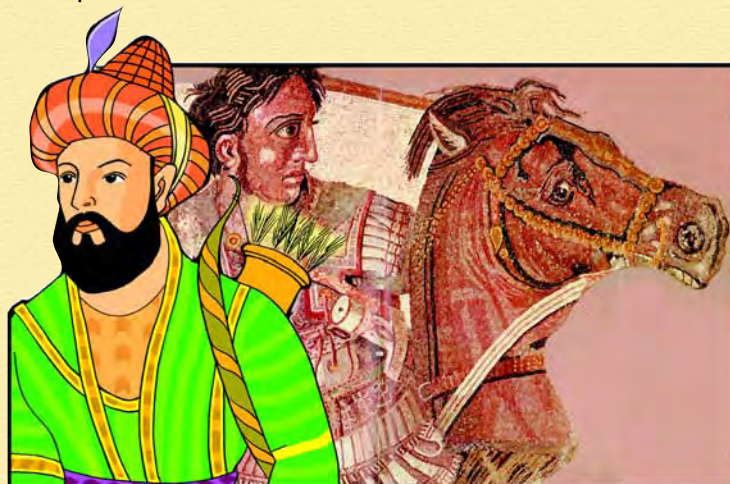
The story of Aladdin and his magical lamp is one of the most popular tales from the Arabian Nights. So, you can't really be blamed if you took Aladdin to be an Arab boy. But there you're mistaken! The original story in "Tales of the 1001 Arabian Nights" begins – "Aladdin was a little Chinese boy." Talk about mistaken identities!



INDIA SCOPE

When the gods dance

Lord Shiva is also called Nataraja or the god of dance. According to a Manipuri legend, the gods take time off from their other duties to indulge in merry-making. Manipuris celebrate this as a fifteen day festival called Lai Haroba (*lai*–gods, *haroba*–merry-making) in April-May. Shiva was looking for a place to dance. He saw a vast lake and aimed his trident at the lake, which then dried up. The Lord then asked seven gods and seven goddesses to fetch earth from heaven and spread it over the area. As soon as the task was completed, they began dancing and they danced for seven nights and seven days. Other gods and goddesses joined them to provide the music while they danced. Nagadeva, the serpent god, with his Mani or gem was present and it floodlit the place. That is how the place got the name Manipur. Lai Haroba is nowadays celebrated as a dance drama woven round Khamba, a brave but poor lad, and Thaibi, a beautiful princess. Manipuris believe them to be incarnations of Shiva and Parvati.



Another Alexander

We all know of the Greek conqueror who invaded India in 327 B.C. A thousand years later, India was ruled by someone who called himself the Second Alexander. He was Khalji Sultan of the Khalji dynasty who ruled from Delhi from A.D. 1290. There were six rulers. Sultan Alaud-din, the third Khalji, was the ablest of all. He overran the Hindu kingdoms of Gujarat

and Malwa and captured the forts of Chitor and Ranthambor. He also sent his army to Deogir, Warangal and Dvarasamudra in the south. These military successes prompted Sultan Alaud-din to assume the title of Iskander-i-Saani and strike gold coins with the title.



From the pen of
Ruskin Bond

MONKEY TROUBLE

Grandfather bought Tutu from a street entertainer for ten rupees. The man had three monkeys. Tutu was the smallest but the most mischievous. She remained tied up most of the time. The little monkey looked so miserable with a collar and chain that Grandfather decided it would be much happier in our home. Grandfather had a weakness for keeping unusual pets. It was a habit that I, at the age of eight or nine, used to encourage.

Grandmother at first objected to having a monkey in the house. "You've enough pets as it is," she said, referring to Grandfather's goat, several white mice, and a small tortoise.

"But I don't have any," I said.

"You're wicked enough for two monkeys. One boy

in the house is all I can take."

"Ah, but Tutu isn't a boy," Chuckled Grandfather triumphantly. "This is a little girl monkey!"

Grandmother gave in. She had always wanted a little girl in the house. She believed girls are less troublesome than boys. Tutu was to prove her wrong.

She was a pretty little monkey. Her bright eyes sparkled with mischief beneath deep-set eyebrows. And her teeth, which were a pearly white, were often revealed in a grin that frightened the wits out of Aunt Ruby, whose nerves had already suffered from the presence of Grandfather's pet python in the house at Lucknow. But this was Dehra, my grandparents' house, and aunts and uncles had to put up with our pets.

Tutu's hands had a dried-up look, as though they had been pickled in the sun for many years. One of the first things I taught her was to shake hands, and this she insisted on doing with all who visited the house. Peppery Major Malik would have to stoop and shake hands with Tutu before he could enter the drawing room, otherwise Tutu would climb on his shoulder and stay there, roughing up his hair and playing with his moustache.

Uncle Benji couldn't stand any of our pets and took a particular dislike to Tutu, who was always making faces at him. But as Uncle Benji was never in a job for long, and depended on Grandfather's good-



natured generosity, he had to shake hands with Tutu like everyone else.

Tutu's fingers were quick and wicked. And her tail, while adding to her good looks (for that matter, Grandfather believed a tail would add to anyone's good looks!), also served as a third hand. She could use it to hang from a branch, and it was capable of scooping up any delicacy that might be out of reach of her hands.

Aunt Ruby had not been informed of Tutu's arrival. Loud shrieks from her bedroom brought us running to see what was wrong. It was only Tutu trying on Aunt Ruby's petticoats! They were much too large, of course, and when Aunt Ruby entered the room, all she saw was a faceless white blob jumping up and down on the bed.

We disentangled Tutu and soothed Aunt Ruby. I gave Tutu a bunch of sweet peas to make her happy. Granny didn't like anyone plucking her sweet peas, so I took some from Major Malik's garden while he was having his afternoon siesta.

Then Uncle Benji complained that his hairbrush was missing. We found Tutu sunning herself on the back verandah, using the hairbrush to scratch her armpits. I took it from her and handed it back to Uncle Benji with an apology; but he flung the brush away with a curse.

"Such a fuss about nothing," I said. "Tutu doesn't have fleas!"

"No, and she bathes more often than Benji," said Grandfather, who had borrowed Aunt Ruby's shampoo for giving Tutu a bath.

All the same, Grandmother objected to Tutu being given the run of the house. Tutu had to spend her nights in the outhouse, in the company of the goat. They got on quite well, and it was not long before Tutu was seen sitting comfortably on the back of the goat, while the goat roamed the back garden in search of its favourite grass.

The day Grandfather had to visit Meerut to collect his railway pension, he decided to take Tutu and me along to keep us both out of mischief, he said. To prevent Tutu from wandering about on the train, causing inconvenience to passengers, she was provided with a large black travelling bag. This, with some straw at the bottom, became her compartment. Grandfather and I paid for our seats, and we took Tutu along as hand baggage.

There was enough space for Tutu to look out of the bag occasionally, and to be fed with bananas and biscuits, but she could not get her hands through the opening and the canvas was too strong for her to bite her way through.

Tutu's efforts to get out only had the effect of making the bag roll about on the floor or occasionally jump into the air—an exhibition that attracted a curious crowd of onlookers at the Dehra and Meerut railway stations.



Anyway, Tutu remained in the bag as far as Meerut, but while Grandfather was producing our tickets at the turnstile, she suddenly poked her head out of the bag and gave the ticket collector a wide grin.

The poor man was taken aback. But, with great presence of mind and much to Grandfather's annoyance, he said, "Sir, you have a dog with you. You'll have to buy a ticket for it."

"It's not a dog!" said Grandfather indignantly. "This

is a baby monkey of the species *macacus-mischievous*, closely related to the human species *homus-horribilis*! And there is no charge for babies!"

"It's as big as a cat," said the ticket collector. "Cats and dogs have to be paid for."

"But I tell you it's only a baby!" protested Grandfather.

"Do you have a birth certificate to prove that?" demanded the ticket collector.

"Next you'll be wanting to see her mother," snapped Grandfather.

In vain did he take Tutu out of the bag. In vain did he try to prove that a young monkey did not qualify as a dog or a cat or even as a quadruped. Tutu was classified as a dog by the ticket collector, and five rupees was paid as her fare.

Then Grandfather, just to get his own back, took from his pocket the small tortoise that he sometimes carried about, and said: "And what must I pay for this, since you charge for all creatures big and small?"

The ticket collector looked closely at the tortoise, prodded it with his forefinger, gave Grandfather a triumphant look, and said, "No charge, sir. It is not a dog!"

Winters in north India can be very cold. A great treat for Tutu on winter evenings was the large bowl of hot water given to her by Grandmother for a bath. Tutu would cunningly test the temperature with her hand, then gradually step into the bath, first one foot, then the other (as she had seen me doing) until she was in the water up to her neck.

Once comfortable, she would take the soap in her hands or feet and rub herself all over. When the water became cold she would get out and run as quickly as she could to the kitchen fire in order to dry herself. If

anyone laughed at her during this performance, Tutu's feelings would be hurt and she would refuse to go on with the bath.

One day Tutu almost succeeded in boiling herself alive. Grandmother had left a large kettle on the fire for tea. And Tutu, all by herself and with nothing better to do, decided to remove the lid. Finding the water just warm enough for a bath, she got in, with her head sticking out from the open kettle.

This was fine for a while, until the water began to get heated. Tutu raised herself a little. But finding it cold outside, she sat down again. She continued hopping up and down for some time until Grandmother returned and hauled her, half-boiled, out of the kettle.

"What's for tea today?" asked Uncle Benji gleefully. "Boiled eggs and a half-boiled monkey?"

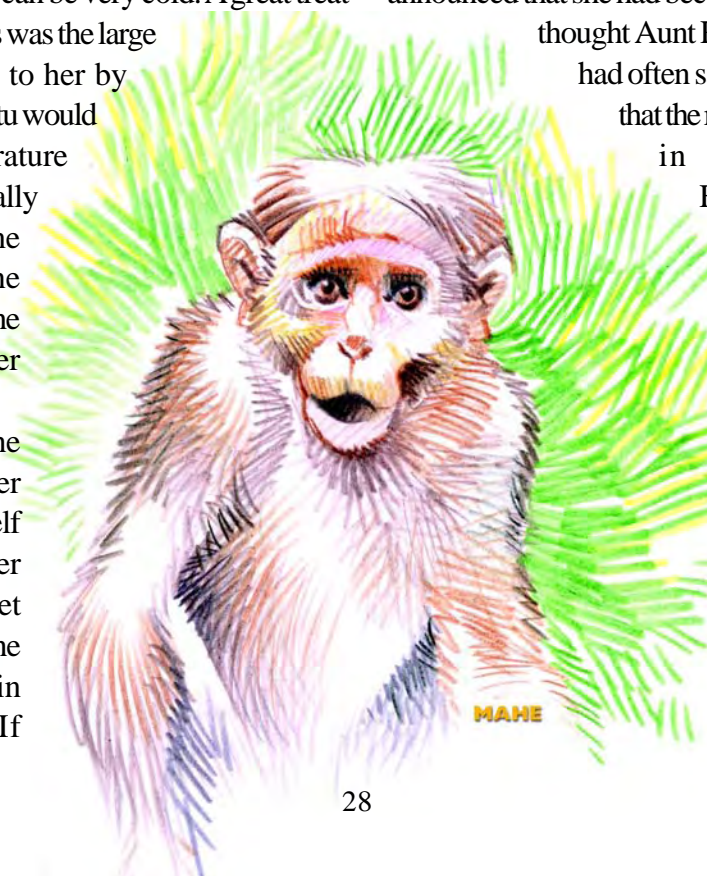
But Tutu was none the worse for the adventure and continued to bathe more regularly than Uncle Benji.

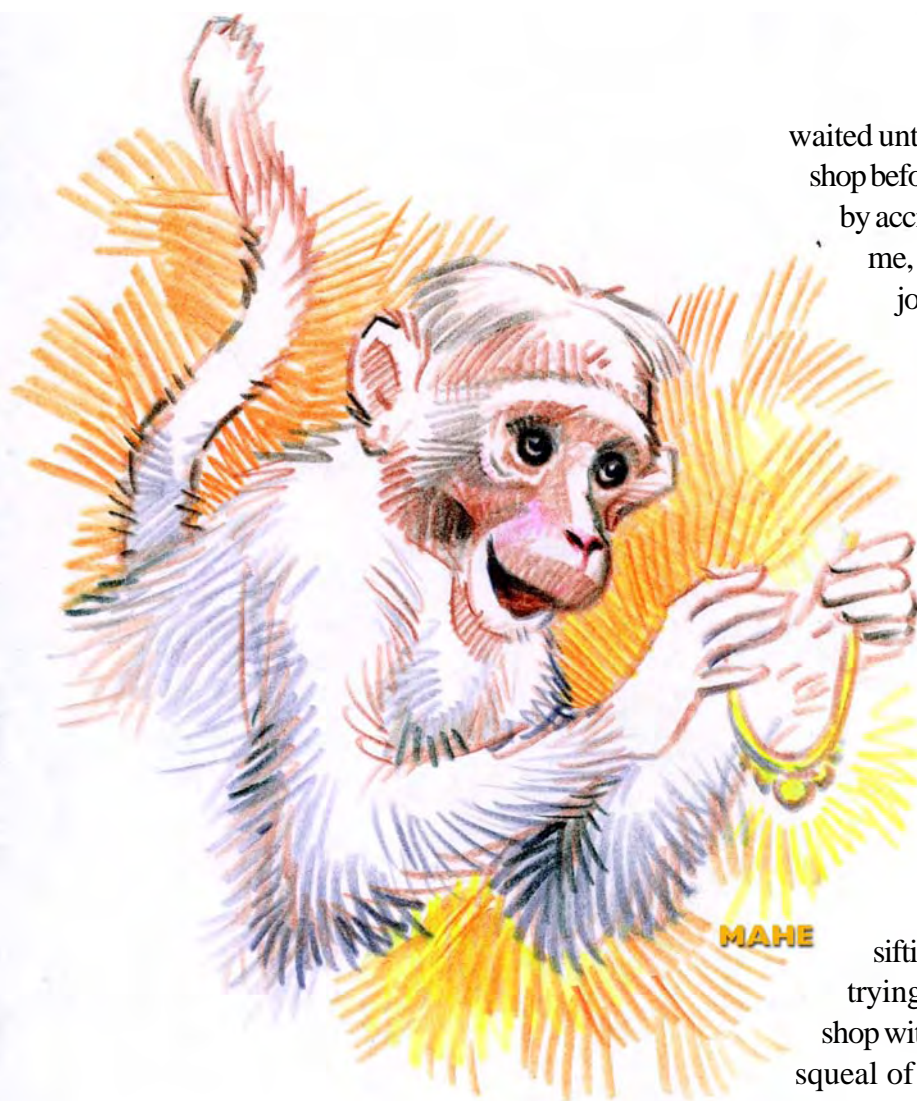
Aunt Ruby was one who took a bath frequently. This met with Tutu's approval so much so that, one day, when Aunt Ruby had finished shampooing her hair she looked up through a lather of bubbles and soap-suds to see Tutu sitting opposite her in the bath, following her example.

One day Aunt Ruby took us all by surprise. She announced that she had become engaged. We had always thought Aunt Ruby would never marry—she had often said so herself—but it appeared that the right man had now come along in the person of Rocky Fernandes, a school teacher from Goa.

Rocky was a tall, firm-jawed, good-natured man, a couple of years younger than Aunt Ruby. He had a fine baritone voice and sang in the manner of the great Nelson Eddy. As Grandmother liked baritone singers, Rocky was soon in her good books.

"But what on earth does he see in her?" Uncle Benji wanted to know.





"More than any girl has seen in you!" snapped Grandmother. "Ruby's a fine girl. And they're both teachers. Maybe they can start a school of their own."

Rocky used to visit the house quite often and brought me chocolates and cashewnuts, of which he seemed to have an unlimited supply. He also taught me several marching songs. Naturally I approved of Rocky. Aunt Ruby won my grudging admiration for having made such a wise choice.

One day I overheard them talking of going to the bazaar to buy an engagement ring. I decided I would go along, too. But as Aunt Ruby had made it clear that she did not want me around, I decided that I had better follow at a discreet distance. Tutu, becoming aware that a mission of some importance was under way, decided to follow me. But as I had not invited her along, she too decided to keep out of sight.

Once in the crowded bazaar, I was able to get quite close to Aunt Ruby and Rocky without being spotted. I

waited until they had settled down in a large jewellery shop before sauntering past and spotting them as though by accident. Aunt Ruby wasn't too pleased at seeing me, but Rocky waved and called out, "Come and join us! Help your aunt choose a beautiful ring!"

The whole thing seemed to be a waste of good money. But I did not say so—Aunt Ruby was giving me one of her more unloving looks.

"Look, these are pretty!" I said, pointing to some cheap, bright agates set in white metal. But Aunt Ruby wasn't looking. She was immersed in a case of diamonds.

"Why not a ruby for Aunt Ruby?" I suggested, trying to please her.

"That's her lucky stone," said Rocky. "Diamonds are the thing for engagement." And he started singing a song about a diamond being a girl's best friend.

While the jeweller and Aunt Ruby were sifting through the diamond rings, and Rocky was trying out another tune, Tutu had slipped into the shop without being noticed by anyone but me. A little squeal of delight was the first sign she gave of her presence. Everyone looked up to see her trying on a pretty necklace.

"And what are those stones?" I asked.

"They look like pearls," said Rocky.

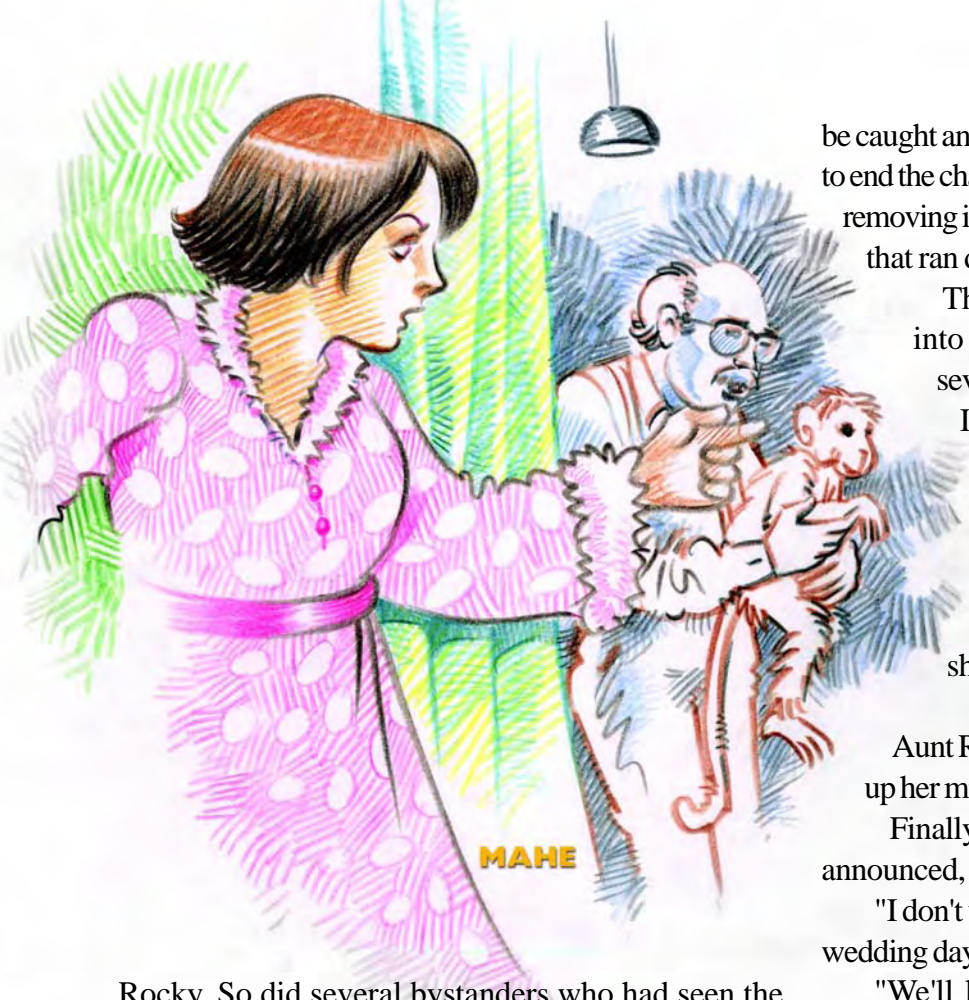
"They are pearls," said the shopkeeper, making a grab for them.

"It's that dreadful monkey!" cried Aunt Ruby. "I knew that boy would bring him here!"

The necklace was already adorning Tutu's neck. I thought she looked rather nice in them, but she gave us no time to admire the effect. Springing out of our reach, Tutu dodged around Rocky, slipped between my legs, and made for the crowded road. I ran after her, shouting to her to stop, but she wasn't listening.

There were no branches to assist Tutu in her progress, but she used the heads and shoulders of people as springboards and so made rapid headway through the bazaar.

The jeweller left his shop and ran after us. So did



Rocky. So did several bystanders who had seen the incident. And others, who had no idea what it was all about, joined in the chase. As Grandfather used to say, "In a crowd, everyone plays follow-the-leader even when they don't know who's leading." Not everyone knew that the leader was Tutu. Only the front runners could see her.

She tried to make her escape speedier by leaping on to the back of a passing scooterist. The scooter swerved into a fruit stall and came to a standstill under a heap of bananas, while the scooterist found himself in the arms of an indignant fruitseller. Tutu peeled a banana and ate a part of it before deciding to move on.

From an awning she made an emergency landing on a washerman's donkey. The donkey promptly panicked and rushed down the road, while bundles of washing fell by the wayside. The washerman joined in the chase. Children on their way to school decided that here was something better to do than attend classes. With shouts of glee, they soon overtook their panting elders.

Tutu finally left the bazaar and took a road leading in the direction of our house. But knowing that she would

be caught and locked up once she got home, she decided to end the chase by ridding herself of the necklace. Deftly removing it from her neck, she flung it in the small canal that ran down the road.

The jeweller, with a cry of anguish, plunged into the canal. So did Rocky. So did I. So did several other people, both adults and children.

It was to be a treasure hunt!

Some twenty minutes later, Rocky shouted, "I've found it!" Covered in mud, water-lilies, ferns and tadpoles, we emerged from the canal, and Rocky presented the necklace to the relieved shopkeeper.

Everyone trudged back to the bazaar to find Aunt Ruby waiting in the shop, still trying to make up her mind about a suitable engagement ring.

Finally the ring was bought, the engagement was announced, and a date was set for the wedding.

"I don't want that monkey anywhere near us on our wedding day," declared Aunt Ruby.

"We'll lock her up in the outhouse," promised Grandfather. "And we'll let her out after you've left for your honeymoon."

A few days before the wedding, I found Tutu in the kitchen helping Grandmother prepare the wedding cake. Tutu often helped with the cooking, and, when Grandmother wasn't looking, added herbs, spices, and other interesting items to the pots—so that occasionally we found a chilli in the custard or an onion in the jelly or a strawberry floating on the chicken soup.

Sometimes these additions improved a dish, sometimes they did not. Uncle Benji lost a tooth when he bit firmly into a sandwich which contained walnut shells.

I'm not sure exactly what went into that wedding cake when Grandmother wasn't looking—she insisted that Tutu was always very well-behaved in the kitchen—but I did spot Tutu stirring in some red chilli sauce, bitter gourd seeds, and a generous helping of egg-shells!

It's true that some of the guests were not seen for several days after the wedding, but no one said anything against the cake. Most people thought it had an interesting flavour.

The great day dawned, and the wedding guests made their way to the little church that stood on the outskirts of Dehra—a town with a church, two mosques, and several temples.

I had offered to dress Tutu up as a bridesmaid and bring her along, but no one except Grandfather thought it was a good idea. So I was an obedient boy and locked Tutu in the outhouse. I did, however, leave the skylight open a little. Grandmother had always said that fresh air was good for growing children, and I thought Tutu should have her share of it.

The wedding ceremony went without a hitch. Aunt Ruby looked a picture, and Rocky looked like a film star.

Grandfather played the organ, and did so with such gusto that the small choir could hardly be heard. Grandmother cried a little, I sat quietly in a corner, with the little tortoise on my lap.

When the service was over, we trooped out into the sunshine and made our way back to the house for the reception.

The feast had been laid out on tables in the garden. As the gardener had been left in charge, everything was in order. Tutu was on her best behaviour. She had, it appeared, used the skylight to avail of more fresh air outside, and now sat beside the three-tier wedding cake, guarding it against crows, squirrels and the goat. She greeted the guests with squeals of delight.

It was too much for Aunt Ruby. She flew Tutu in a rage. And Tutu, sensing that she was not welcome, leapt away, taking with her the top tier of the wedding cake.

Led by Major Milik, we followed her into the orchard, only to find that she had climbed to the top of

the jackfruit tree. From there she proceeded to pelt us with bits of the wedding cake. She had also managed to get hold of a bag of confetti, and when she ran out of cake she showered us with confetti.

"That's more like it!" said the good-humoured Rocky. "Now let's return to the party, folks!"

Uncle Benji remained with Major Malik, determined to chase Tutu away. He kept throwing stones into the tree, until he received a large piece of cake bang on his nose. Muttering threats, he returned to the party, leaving the Major to do battle.

When the festivities were finally over, Uncle Benji took out the old car out of the garage and drove up to the verandah steps. He was going to drive Aunt Ruby and Rocky to the nearby hill-resort of Mussoorie, where they would have their honeymoon.

Watched by family and friends, Aunt Ruby and Rocky climbed into the back seat. Aunt Ruby waved regally to everyone. She leaned out of the window and offered me her cheek and I had to kiss her farewell. Everyone wished them luck.

As Rocky burst into a song, Uncle Benji opened the throttle and stepped on the accelerator. The car shot forward in a cloud of dust.

Rocky and Aunt Ruby continued to wave to us. And so did Tutu from her perch on the rear bumper! She was clutching a bag in her hands and showering confetti on all who stood in the driveway.

"They don't know Tutu's with them!" I exclaimed. "She'll go all the way to Mussoorie! Will Aunt Ruby let her stay with them?"

"Tutu might ruin the honeymoon," said Grandfather.

"But don't worry—Benji will bring her back!"





A REPUBLIC

Long before India became a republic, there existed the country's first republic in Vaishali, on the banks of the Ganga. Today identified as Muzaffarpur in Bihar, Vaishali was peopled by the Lichchavis. In the 4th century B.C., they had a king called Ikshvaku. It was his son, Vaishal, who built a new city which later came to be known as Vaishali.

The city was well protected by a high wall all around. Within the city were houses for the officials and the people. The land outside the city was fertile where people raised various crops and planted trees all over, especially along the pathways to give the much-needed shelter and shade for the weary travellers. In short, Vaishali became prosperous in a short time. The people were united and lived with amity amongst themselves.

When Vaishal passed away without an heir or any close relative to succeed him, it was decided to instal a people's government. Accordingly, they elected one among themselves as Nayak who chose a select band of people to help him govern the land. By and by Vaishali became so strong and the people so brave that none of the neighbours dared attack them. Some of the kingdoms, however, marked their time to invade Vaishali.

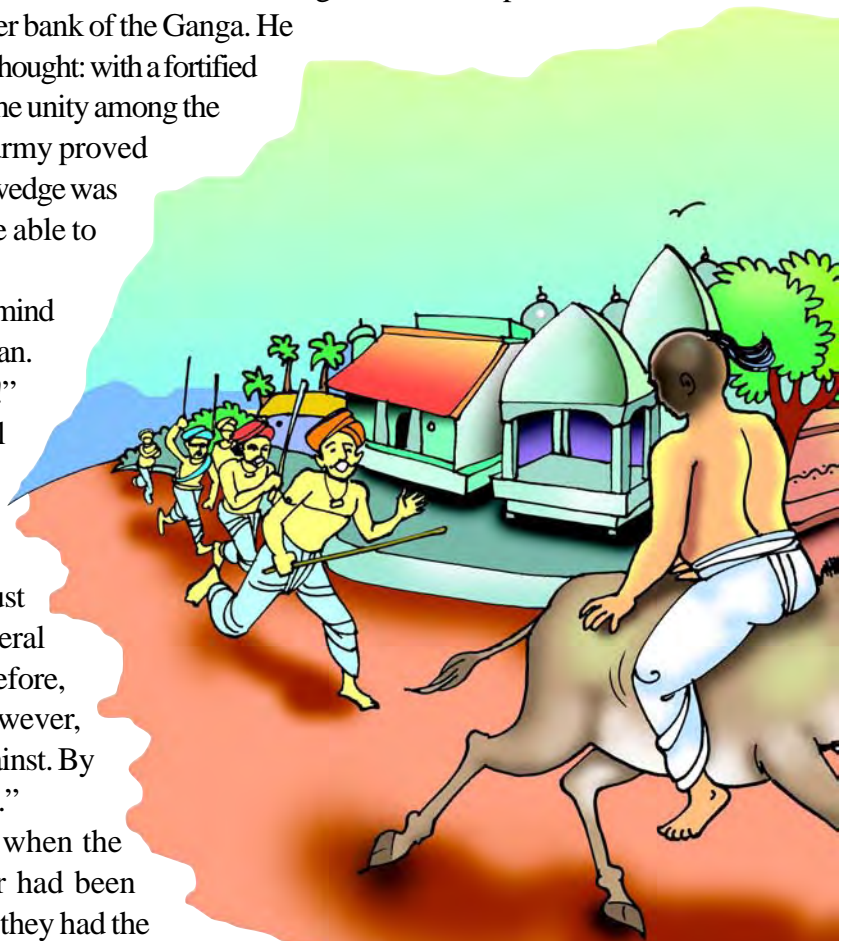
This account is that of a minister of Magadha who proved too clever for the Lichchavis and how their land was ultimately invaded. However, it was not an overnight success, but the minister went about his role in a well laid out strategy. In Magadha, Ajatashatru ascended the throne after killing his father, Emperor Bimbisara. Like Vaishal, he too built a new city on the other bank of the Ganga. He called it Pataliputra (present day Patna). He now thought: with a fortified city behind him, he could invade Vaishali, but the unity among the Lichchavis and the strength of the people's army proved impregnable. Ajatashatru realised that unless a wedge was created among the people, he would never be able to subdue Vaishali.

His crafty minister Vasyakar could read the mind of the emperor. He went to Ajatashatru with a plan. "Your majesty, I shall get Vaishali for Magadha!"

Ajatashatru stared into his eyes. He had full confidence in his minister. He could utter only a single word. "How?" And the word came out of his mouth in a whisper.

Vasyakar went closer to the king. "You must let know to the officials and the people in general that you are displeased with me and I'm, therefore, being banished from the kingdom. I shall, however, enter Vaishali, and pretend that I am sinned against. By and by, you will receive a signal when to strike."

The people of Magadha were stunned when the rumour went round that minister Vasyakar had been removed from his position. Soon afterwards, they had the



COMES TO AN END

shock of their life when they saw the former minister, shaven on the head and blackened on the face, astride a donkey and facing backwards, being driven out of Magadha by the royal guards. The officials were aghast. They wondered how he might have displeased the emperor so as to deserve banishment. They were now more afraid of Ajatashatru.

Vasyakar was taken to the border. He waited till the guards left and then crossed over to Vaishali. The people there wondered who the stranger was. After he had washed his face clean and put on a decent dress, some people recognised him as the minister from Magadha. He told them how he had invited the displeasure of the emperor who was known as a despot and how he was banished. The Lichchavis believed his pitiful story and made arrangements for his stay. By and by, the officials of Vaishali began to meet him for advice. They reposed their faith in him.

Vasyakar was not in any hurry. He worked his way up to become the chief judge. He was now a popular figure and people came to respect him. At the same time, he was also plotting his next strategy. First he worked with the officials and told them how the people could be made to pay more taxes so that the army could be strengthened by recruiting more soldiers and giving them more arms. In no time, there was disgruntlement among the people who turned their ire against the officials.

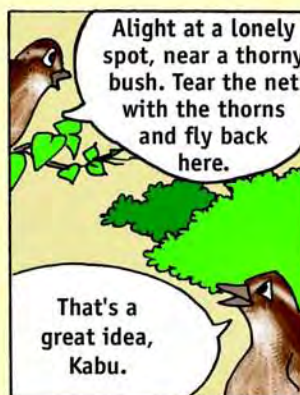
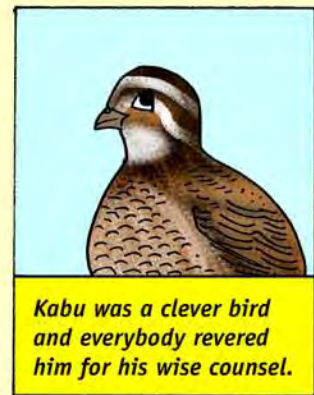
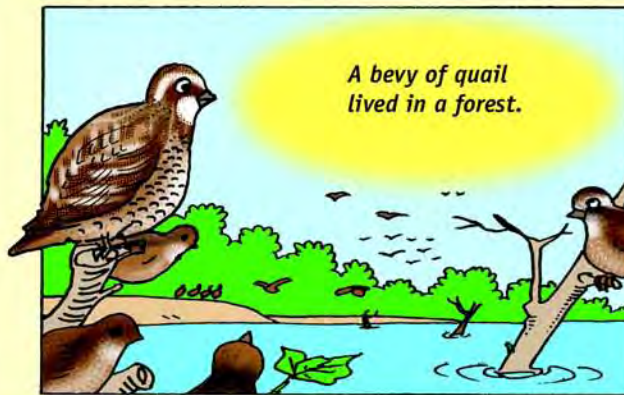
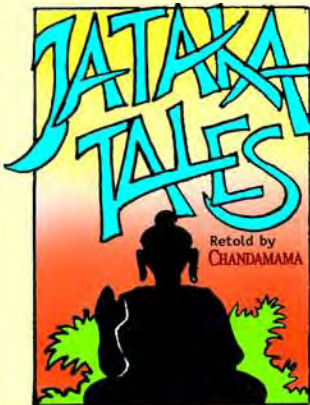
The crafty judge, whom the people approached with petitions, found them confused and confounded. True, they agreed, the republic needed a strong people's army, but they did not want the officials to fleece them. Besides, how were they certain that the extra money they collected was being utilised properly?

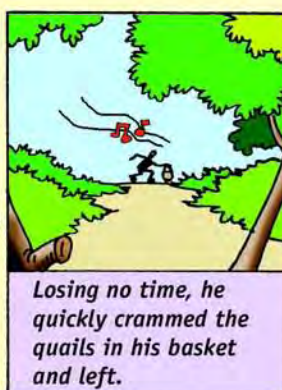
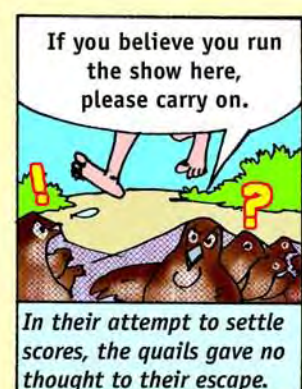
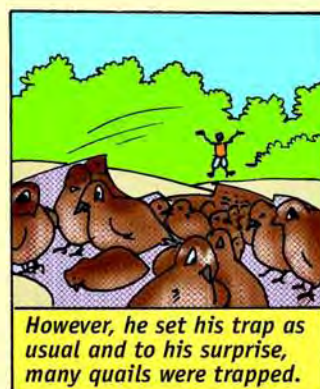
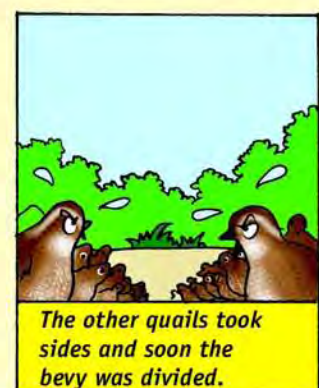
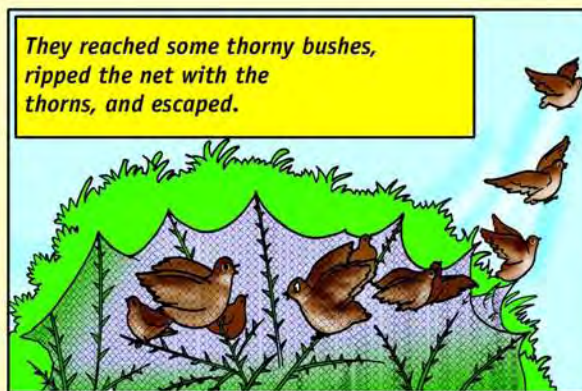
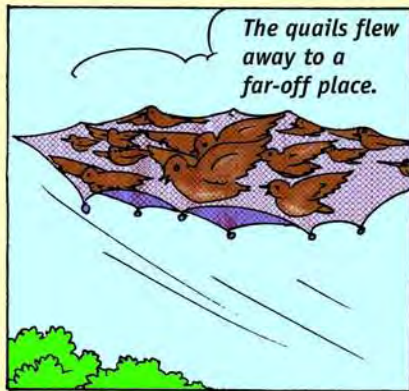
Vasyakar was now certain that he had sown the seeds of discord among the Lichchavis, who began forming groups to attack the officials. There were skirmishes between them. As had been the practice, Vasyakar had the war drums sounded to find out how alert the people would be. As many people knew it was only a test, they failed to take notice of the warning and went about attending to their chores. Vasyakar realised that he had achieved his goal. He had succeeded in breaking the unity among the people. He now despatched a spy to Ajatashatru with a message: the time had come to invade Vaishali.

The Magadha emperor was just waiting for the signal. He crossed the Ganga with a large army, which was soon knocking at the three fortified gates of Vaishali. They were opened, not by the soldiers but the people themselves. They welcomed the invaders. The war drums once again were sounded, but it was too late. Emperor Ajatashatru made a triumphant entry into Vaishali.

The war drums, which were ignored by a majority of the Lichchavis, really sounded the end of India's most ancient republic.







Mulla Nasruddin loved to travel. But, this time, he had spent almost a year at home. He was feeling restless. His wife was feeling the strain. He suspected that she was not showing him due consideration. She on her part feared that he was becoming increasingly demanding and, at times, quick to lose his temper. Small acts of omission often led them into tiffs. She knew the root cause of the problem. They had never been this long together without a break. Absence, she felt, always made the heart yearn for company.

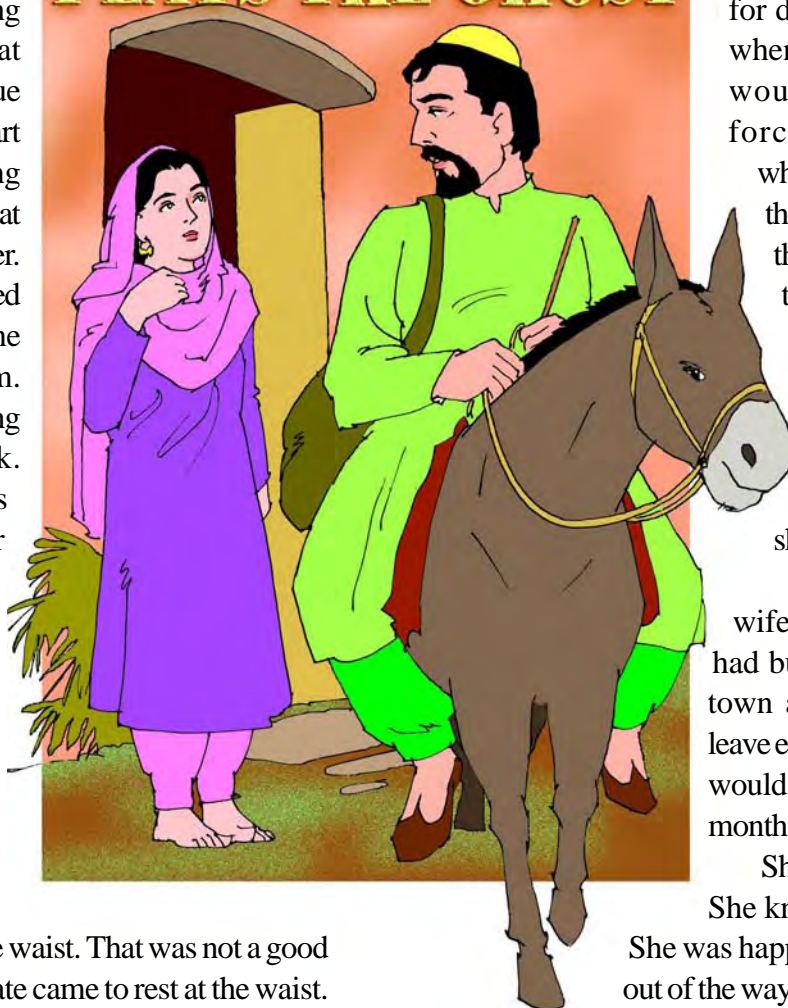
Nasruddin, too, was thinking along those lines. He knew what to do. He would undertake a journey.

That made sense for another reason, too. He looked at himself and noticed that he was gathering weight around the waist. That was not a good sign. The fat in the food he ate came to rest at the waist. Why the fat chose the waist as the resting point was beyond his comprehension. But it did.

Travel not only broadened the mind, but thinned down the waist. To gain knowledge, a man had to travel. To look trim and prim also he had to travel.

Travel, in Nasruddin's days, was a real-life adventure. The man on the move did not know when he would get his next meal, or where he would find it. He was never sure where he would spend the next night. It could be an inn with all comforts; or a deserted wayside shed; and, often, out in the open, under the blue sky, with a sheet spread on the ground and the rolled-up bag that held one's clothes and articles of daily use, serving as the pillow. There were, of course, dangers too. The weather

NASRUDDIN PLAYS THE GHOST



for one! It was unpredictable. One wasn't sure when a desert storm could delay the traveller for days at a stretch; or when highway robbers would sweep in and forcibly take away whatever they could lay their hands on. The first thing that they usually took away was one's mount, forcing the traveller to cover the rest of the journey on foot. By being on his feet, he shed weight.

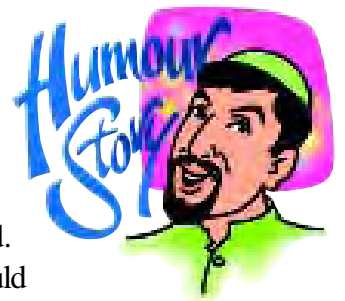
Nasruddin told his wife, one night, that he had business at a distant town and that he would leave early next morning. "I would be away for about a month," he added.

She was not surprised. She knew it was coming.

She was happy, too, to have him out of the way, for a month or two.

She packed all his clothes, a spare cap and a second pair of shoes, and food for the day in a shoulder bag. She came up to the door to see him off. He gently pressed her arm, got on to the back of his donkey, looked at her with loving eyes, once, and then nudged the animal. She stood and watched till she could see him no more. Tears trickled down her cheeks. She would miss him, for sure!

Nasruddin joined a group of traders who, too, were heading for the same destination. Some of them knew him. They welcomed him heartily. He entertained them with stories and anecdotes. At noon, the party rested near an oasis. They shared their food, slept in the shade for an hour or so and then set out, again. They still had to cover quite some distance to reach the nearest town. They



coaxed their mounts to move faster. Nasruddin tried to keep pace with them. But his donkey was tired. It could not run fast.

Soon Nasruddin fell behind. He did not use the stick. He felt the donkey could do no better. If he forced it to move faster, it might collapse. 'Better a slow-moving donkey than a dead one!' he told himself.

The members of the party moved on, telling Nasruddin they would wait for him at the town's inn.

Soon light began to fade. Night walked in, quietly, silently. With it came spreading darkness. Nasruddin could still see through, though with some difficulty, in the twilight. He looked around and noticed a low stone wall. He pulled in the reins, stretched his neck and tried to find out what sort of a place lay behind the wall. His eyes fell on a few tombstones. He had arrived at a graveyard.

Why should he not spend the night in the cemetery? It seemed to him the ideal spot. He was tired. Bone-weary, if one may add. His donkey, too, was tired. Both he and the animal needed a good night's rest. The cemetery seemed the ideal place to spend the night. It offered safety and security. Most people believed that the ghosts of the dead hovered around the place at night. No marauders would enter a cemetery. What would they find in a cemetery? Here he was wrong.

Nasruddin steered the donkey, close to the low stonewall, till he found the entrance. He got off his mount, tied it to a post, spread food held in a sack before it and strode off. His shoulder bag swung with every step he took. He sat down near a tombstone, pulled out the food his wife had lovingly prepared and sat down to dine in style. He looked up

and saw tall palm trees, casting their shadows. When the wind ran through them, their shadows danced. Nasruddin was amused.

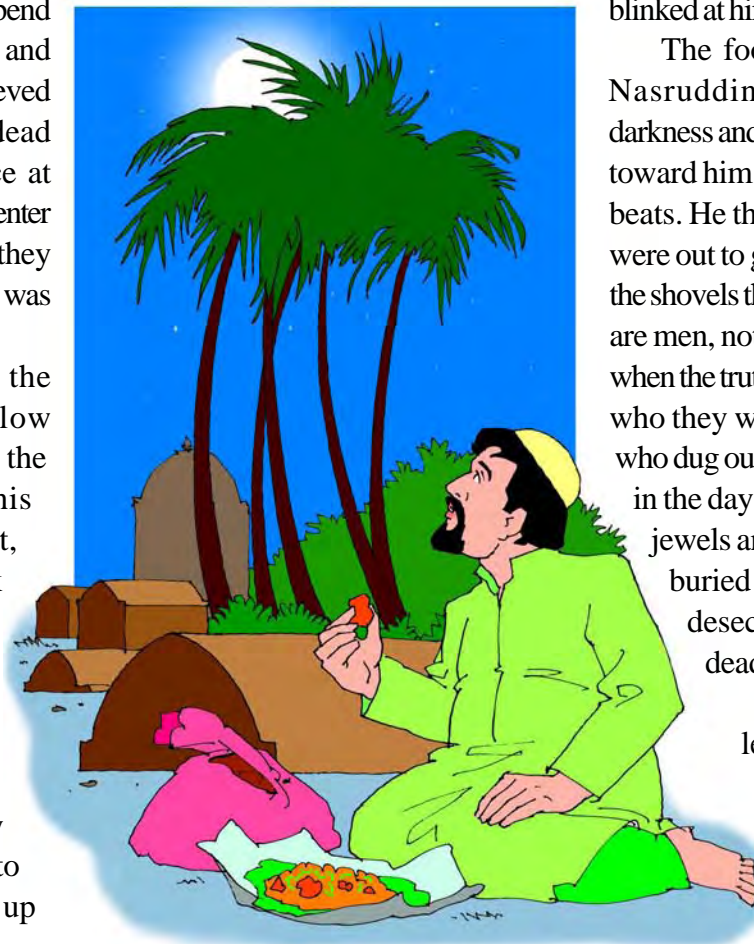
The sight of the dancing palms would have scared most people. But not Nasruddin. He pooh-poohed at the idea of ghosts and spirits. 'It is all in the mind,' he told himself, while he enjoyed the food. He was ravenously hungry and he cleaned up the packet at one go. He threw the wrapper of the food packet close to the wall, lay down, resting his head on the base of the tombstone and slept off.

He didn't know for how long he slept. He woke up on hearing footsteps at a distance and sharpened his ears. He now heard the footsteps more clearly. Had another day dawned? Had people started moving? Was it time for him to get up and move? He opened his eyes and looked around. It was still dark. The air was cool. The wind rustled around, turning the shadows of the palms into dancing ghosts. The stars in the sky winked and blinked at him.

The footsteps became louder. Nasruddin peered through the darkness and saw five figures walking toward him. His heart missed a few beats. He thought a group of ghosts were out to get him. Then he noticed the shovels that the figures held. 'They are men, not ghosts,' he felt relieved when the truth struck him. He guessed who they were. They were robbers who dug out the bodies buried earlier in the day to lay their hands on the jewels and clothes the dead were buried with. He hated them for desecrating the abode of the dead.

'I would teach them a lesson,' he resolved. He stood up and howled at a high pitch.

The men stopped in their path. They



held on to each other, scared, not knowing what was producing the sound. Could it be a ghost?

The leader of the group held the men back. He decided to check. He moved closer to Nasruddin. "Don't come any near. Or I shall gobble you up!" Nasruddin screamed, waving the shoulder bag that took the shape of a club in the eyes of the scared robbers.

"Who are you?" the leader of the gang asked, drawing back.

"How dare you ask me for my identity? Don't you know? Can't you guess? This is the cemetery. This is the place for the dead. I am one of the dead," Nasruddin's voice sounded rough and gruff.

"The dead, if you are indeed dead, should lie quietly in the grave," the leader overcame his fears and joked.

"Have you ever been in a grave?" Nasruddin produced the eerie laughter of an evil spirit.

"Oh, no. I'm in no hurry."

"But you will be there if you linger on here any more. I hate those who argue with me. I can strike you dead, with one look. Take my advice. Get out of this place, right away. Or..." his grating voice sounded ominous.

"I'm on my way," the group leader sidled back.

"Get out. I want to roam around the ground. Know why I came out? You won't know. You've never been in a grave. I was buried two days back. The tomb is too humid and hot. I want to enjoy fresh air. Ah! I want you out this instant!" Nasruddin screamed.

The men took to flight as he added, "And, one more



thing. Keep away from my donkey. If I find it had been harmed, I shall see everyone to your grave."

The robbers ran for their lives. This was a new experience for Nasruddin, one that he told his friends to rid them of the fear of ghosts and evil spirits.

- By R.K.Murthi



Don't Mess with the Judge

Three men went to a bar. One man got drunk and started a fight with the other two. The police came and took the drunken one to jail. The next day the man was before the judge. The judge asked the man, "Where do you work?" The man said, "Here and there." The judge asked the man, "What do you do for a living?" The man said, "This and that." The judge then said, "Take him away!" The man said, "Wait. Judge, when will I get out?" The judge said to the man, "Sooner or later."

KALEIDOSCOPE



THERE'S A LIGHT SOMEWHERE

If you're sad and bored,
If you're hungry and cold,
If you're stuck in the dark hall alone
Just note that there's a light somewhere!
If you're staring at the sky,
Thinking why you're here and why,
Just note that there's a light somewhere!

Shaakya Vembar (9), Jakarta

NATURE'S ANGER

Cuddalore was one of the worst affected areas in Tamil Nadu in the tsunami tragedy

When I was quiet
People ill-treated me
By throwing garbage
Canalizing drainage water.
When I could not tolerate
I rose on a December morning
I, too, have a limit
To keep my patience.
I came to chuck the garbage
But forgot to look down
Unknowingly people and children died
It is all an unexpected accident.
Unknowingly I killed them
Now I apologize
I know it is too late
As the lost lives cannot be restored.

Arunmozhi (10), Cuddalore



WHY I LIKE MY SCHOOL

It is a Saturday evening and I wish I was in school.

My school is in Ascot, in England. It is very big because it has lots of classes, a dinner hall, a gymnasium, many playgrounds and my favourite climbing frame.

I am in the 'infant area' of the school. My class is called 2G. There are 23 boys and girls in my class. Our teacher is Mrs. Gibson. We have an interactive board that helps us learn by showing us pictures and Maths sums.

First thing every morning, we do English. On some days, after English, we change into our sports clothes for games or gymnastics. In the afternoon we do Maths. In the evening we either do Religious Education, Geography or Science. On Fridays, if we have worked hard on our lessons, we get "Golden Time". "Golden Time" is all about having fun. If it's not raining, we go out to play on the climbing frame. If it is raining, we stay inside and play with the building set or do art. We all get a turn at playing on the computers.

I love my school because we are very busy with lots of interesting things. I like learning my favourite subjects: Maths and Science. We have many competitions in school and I enter them. I just entered the craft competition and made a robot.

We celebrated Book Week when we met authors of children's books, like Eric Madden. We all dressed up as colourful characters from our favourite books. Music is another thing I enjoy in school because I like rhythms and beats. We try out musical instruments,

like the maracas, and we sing. I hope to be a saxophone player when I grow up.

I like my school best of all because of my friends. Sometimes my friends trick me, but I don't bother because most times they are very nice and we have a great time playing together.

**Abhiram Magesh (8),
Ascot**



GOD SPEAKING

The man whispered: "God, please speak to me." And a lark sang in the meadow. But the man did not hear.

So the man yelled: "God, speak to me!" And thunder and lightning rolled across the sky. But the man did not listen.

The man looked around and said: "God, let me see you." And a star shone brightly. But the man did not see.

Now the man shouted: "God, show me a miracle!" And someone was born. But the man did not notice.

So, the man cried out in despair: "Touch me, God, and let me know you are here." Whereupon, God reached down and touched the man. But the man brushed the butterfly away and walked on.

I find the above to be a great reminder that God is always around us in the little and simple things that we take for granted, even in our electronic age - so, I would like to add one more.

The man cried: "God, I need your help." And an e-mail arrived with good news and encouragement.

But the man deleted it and continued crying. The good news is that you are loved!

Don't miss out on a blessing, because it is not packaged the way that you expect!



Harini Venkataraman (13), Chennai



Two rival authors met at a party. One had just published a book. The other complimented him. "I read your book and thought it is great! Tell me, who wrote for you?"

The author of the book responded,

"I'm glad you enjoyed my book. But tell me, who read it for you?"

Shivani Dang (12), Gurgaon

Raju : What is the difference between a clever man and a fool?

Shamu : A clever man will not ask such questions.



Gita : Which dog is this?

Ravi : This is a police dog.

Gita : But, it does not look like one.

Ravi : It belongs to the CID.



Chandrasekhar Padhi (8), Bhubaneswar

One man : I do not believe in anything till I had seen it with my own eyes.

Friend : Have you seen your brain?

Man : No.

Friend : Then how can you believe that you have a brain?



Lipsa Pradhan (9), Bhubaneswar

Nissar : Every day you wear new clothes. Is your father a businessman?

Vishal : No, he's a washerman.



Ajinkya Karande (12), Binaguri

Rinki : Perhaps I saw your face somewhere, did I?

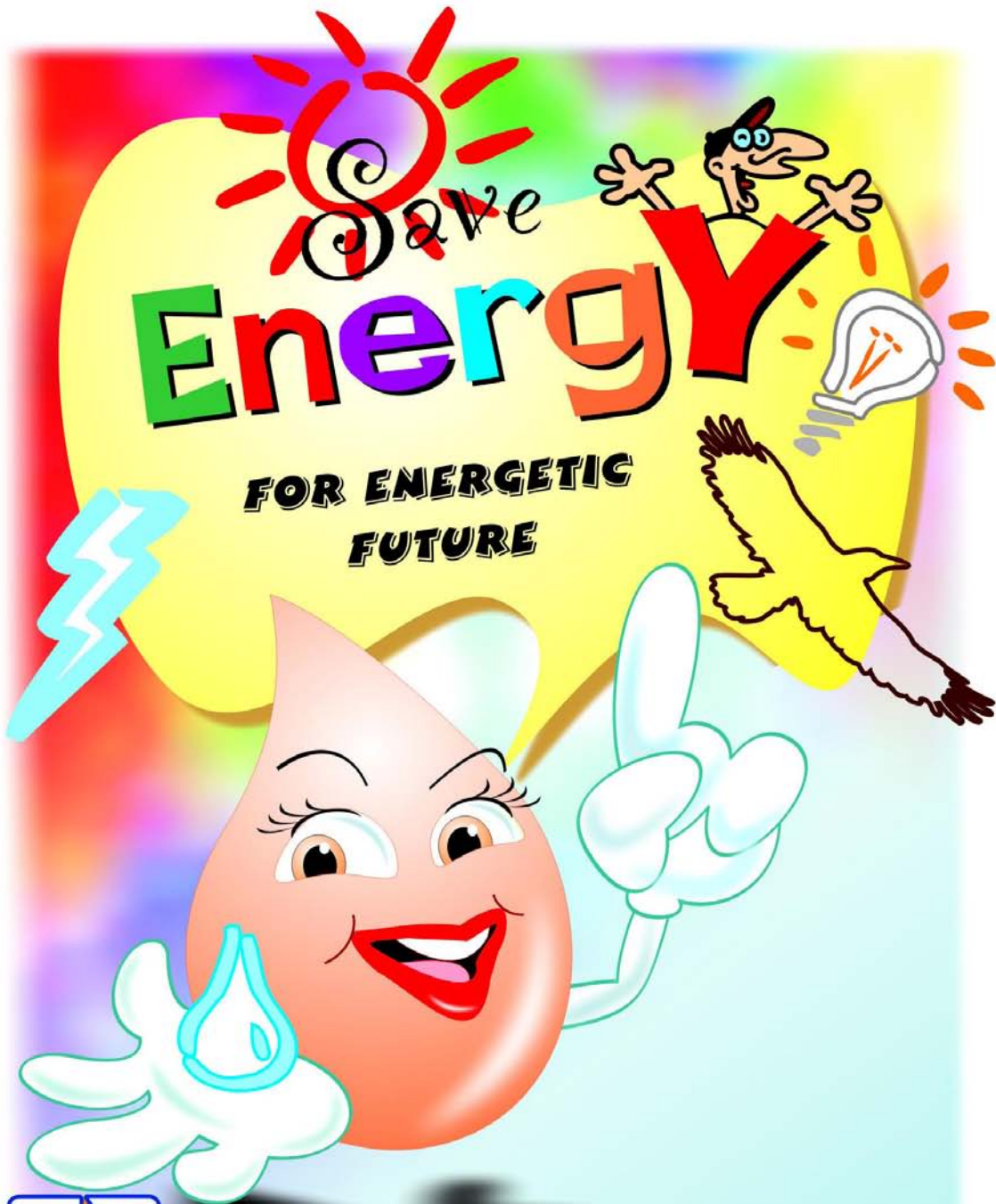
Pinki : Never. My face does not go anywhere, it always remains with me.



Sunita Pal (14), Nayagarh

Save Energy

**FOR ENERGETIC
FUTURE**



PETROLEUM CONSERVATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

www.pcra.org e-mail : pcra@pcra.org

Let The Message Reach New Heights



PETROLEUM CONSERVATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION


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SULEKHA

WHERE CONSERVATION FAILS, POLLUTION STARTS • OIL CONSERVATION FOR A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

Introduction About Energy



Energy is one of the most fundamental parts of our universe. It is also an important part of our daily life.

We use energy to do work. Energy lights up our homes and cities. It powers our vehicles, trains, planes and rockets. Energy from the sun gives us light during the day. It dries our clothes when they are hung outside on a clothesline. It helps plants grow. When animals eat plants, they get energy stored in the plants. When predator animals eat their prey, the predators get energy.

Everything we do is connected to energy in one form or another.

Energy can be defined as "the ability to do work".

When we eat, our bodies transform the energy stored in the food into energy to do work. When we run or walk, we "burn" food energy in our bodies. When we think, read or write, we are also at work. Many times it is really hard work!

Cars, planes, light bulbs, boats and machinery also transform energy into work. All these are only a few of the various types of work. But where does energy come from? There are several sources of energy. They are:

- Biomass Energy from plants
- Geothermal Energy
- Fossil Fuels : Coal, Oil, Natural Gas
- Hydro Power and Ocean Energy
- Nuclear Energy
- Solar Energy
- Wind Energy

In this booklet we will discuss these sources and, we will also take a look at Pollution and its causes, Importance of water, Protection of wildlife, and how we can conserve the energy we use.

Biomass Energy



Biomass is matter usually thought of as garbage. Some of it is just stuff lying around, like dead trees, tree branches, yard clippings, left-over crops, wood chips and bark, and sawdust from lumber mills. It can even include discarded tyres and livestock manure. Recycling biomass for fuel and other uses cuts down on the need for "landfills" to hold garbage. Something similar can be done at animal feed lots. In places where several animals are raised, animals like cattle, pigs and even chicken produce manure. When manure decomposes, it

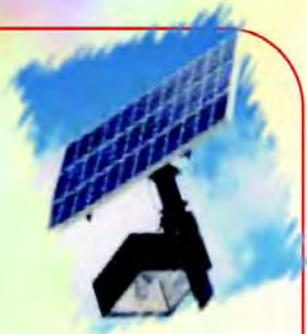
also gives off methane gas similar to garbage. This gas can be burned right at the farm to turn into energy for running the farm. Using biomass does not add to global warming. Plants use as well as retain carbon dioxide (CO₂) when they grow. This is released when the plant material is burned. Carbon dioxide is a gas that, when generated or produced in excess, can contribute to the "greenhouse effect" and global warming. So, the use of biomass is environmentally friendly because the biomass is reduced, recycled and then reused.



We have always used the energy of the sun ever since humans have existed on this planet. We know today that the sun is simply our nearest star. Without it, life would not exist on our planet.



We use the sun's energy every day in many different ways. When we hang laundry outside to dry during day time, we are using the sun's heat to do work — drying our clothes. Plants use the sun's light to make food. Animals eat plants for food. Indirectly, the sun or other stars are responsible for ALL our energy.



Ocean Energy

The world's oceans may eventually provide us with energy to power our homes and factories. Right now, there are very few ocean energy power plants and most are fairly small. But how can we get energy

from the ocean? There are three basic ways to tap the ocean for its energy.

- We can use the ocean's waves,
- Use the ocean's high and low tides, or
- Use temperature differences in the water.



Wind Energy

Wind can be used to do work. The kinetic energy of wind can be changed into mechanical energy. When a boat lifts a sail, it is using wind energy to push it through the water. This is one form of work. Farmers have been using wind energy for many years to pump water from wells using windmills like the one on the right.



Do it yourself Activity

When you are at home or leave for school, work, the gym, a friend's house, or a cinema, do you as a duty remember to conserve energy?

Answer the following questions as truthfully as possible with a simple

YES or NO.



Do I . . .

- Leave more lights on than what I need?
- Leave the lights on even when leaving the room for a short period of time?
- Light the whole room when I need lighting only in one small area?
- Allow the water to run while I wash my hands or brush my teeth?
- Take baths more frequently than is necessary?
- Remain under the shower for a longer while just for pleasure?
- Use hot water when it is not necessary?
- Forget to close shades against heat infiltration?
- Set the thermostat higher or lower than the recommended settings?
- Leave the computer on all day -- even when it is not being operated?
- Keep the TV or radio on even when I am not watching or listening to the programmes?
- Become an all-round energy waster because "after all I am not paying for it?"
- Forget that wasting energy affects me, my family, and the planet?



SCORING:



Count one point for every "no" answer. If your score is:

10 to 13 : Thank you! You are energy conscious wherever you go.

7 to 10 : Watch out! Do not waste energy just because you are not at home.

2 to 6 : Shape up! You are wasting money and energy that could be used more usefully by everyone.

Don't save energy just for your sake — save for the planet.

Causes of Pollution

Pollution is a major problem all around the world. It has adversely affected the lives of millions of people and caused health disorders and even deaths.

Pollution is contamination by a chemical or other agent that renders part of the environment unfit for the intended or desired use. It deserves emphasis that the environment also refers to the place where you live. Some of the major causes of pollution are :

i) Deforestation - For establishing factories and industries and due to urbanization in various parts of the world, trees are cut on a large scale without any adequate efforts to plant new trees.

This leads to deforestation, which has caused a rise in the pollution levels.



ii) Polluted rivers - Waste water and effluents from industrial plants and factories reach the nearby river water, which gets polluted. People in developing/ under developed countries pollute rivers by washing clothes and utensils, bathing and other human activities.



iii) Noise pollution - The machines used in factories make noise throughout the day, and this disturbs the peaceful atmosphere in the vicinity, as

machines used without proper covering lead to sound pollution. This causes heavy mental strain to the people staying in nearby areas.

iv) Air Pollution - Each year industrially developed countries generate billions of tons of pollutants. Many pollutants come from directly identifiable sources; sulfur dioxide, for example, comes from electric power plants burning coal or oil. The increasing number of motor vehicles on the roads has also led to an increase in Air Pollution, due to harmful gases like carbon monoxide which these vehicles emit.

v) Soil pollution - Dumping of wastes in areas of human habitation is a major cause of Soil Pollution. Also, when soil in and near production areas becomes dirty due to disposal of waste material, such land cannot be used for agricultural purposes.



Effects of Pollution

Of the pollutants that taint urban air, fine suspended particulate matter, sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and ozone pose the most widespread and acute risks; however, airborne lead pollution is a critical concern in many cities as well. Recent studies on the effects of chronic exposure to air pollution have singled out particulate matter as the pollutant most responsible for the life-shortening effect of unhealthy air, although other pollutants may also play an important role. These pollutants cause respiratory and other health disorders.

Besides increasing blood pressure and stress levels, noise pollution can also have deleterious effects on hearing. There are two categories of hearing loss resulting from noise exposure. Acoustic trauma is hearing loss resulting from a single exposure to a very loud sound such as an explosion. Noise induced hearing loss arises from repeated exposure to moderate noise. The latter is the more common form of hearing loss due to noise pollution.

Water pollution infects the water and renders it unfit for drinking and other purposes. It is also a major cause of most of the water-borne diseases.

Measures of controlling pollution

Awareness among the masses regarding the adverse effects of pollution around the world can help reduce the intensity of pollution. This awareness can be created through various media like newspapers, television, radio, flyers and seminars.

It is time we took this issue of 'Problems of Pollution' seriously; otherwise it could have adverse effects on our future generations.



Importance of Water

Our Earth seems to be unique among other known celestial bodies. It has water, which covers three-fourths of its surface and constitutes 60-70 per cent of the living world. Water regenerates and is redistributed through evaporation, making it seem endlessly renewable.

So why worry?

The quantity of potable water available per person is dramatically shrinking. In fact, the availability of freshwater will decrease by 33 per cent in the next 50 years due to an astronomical growth in population and giant changes in weather patterns.



How can you save water?

If you make a small effort every day from now, you can make a significant difference over a lifetime.

SOME SIMPLE WAYS TO CONSERVE WATER



1. Install low-flow showerheads, taps, faucets, and toilets, all of which are available at most

plumbing stores.

2. Don't let the water run while brushing your teeth, shaving, washing your hands, or rinsing dishes or vegetables. Use a sink stopper or tub to retain the water you run, and use that water to water your houseplants.

3. Consider an occasional 'navy shower'. On a ship, where fresh-

water is in short supply, sailors get wet, turn off the water to soap and scrub, and then turn the water on again to rinse.

4. Fix dripping taps and leaking toilets by replacing washers and worn out parts. A faucet drip or invisible leak in the toilet will waste up to 15 litres of water a day.

To check for toilet leaks, add 10 drops of food colouring to the tank. Wait for 15 minutes. If the colour appears in the bowl, you know there is a leak.



Indeed, the current rate of water consumption compared with the limited availability of water paints a grim picture, but there are steps you and your family can take. Through simple, daily conservation, we can ensure there is enough water for our future generations.



THE FIELD TRIP

The Mahatma Primary School in Nandhigram has started an Energy Conservation Club. It has 4 members. Their environmental studies teacher, Ms Nirmala, is the coordinator. It is an active club.

They plan to go for a field trip on a Saturday. After breakfast, the children and teacher meet at the school at 7.30.



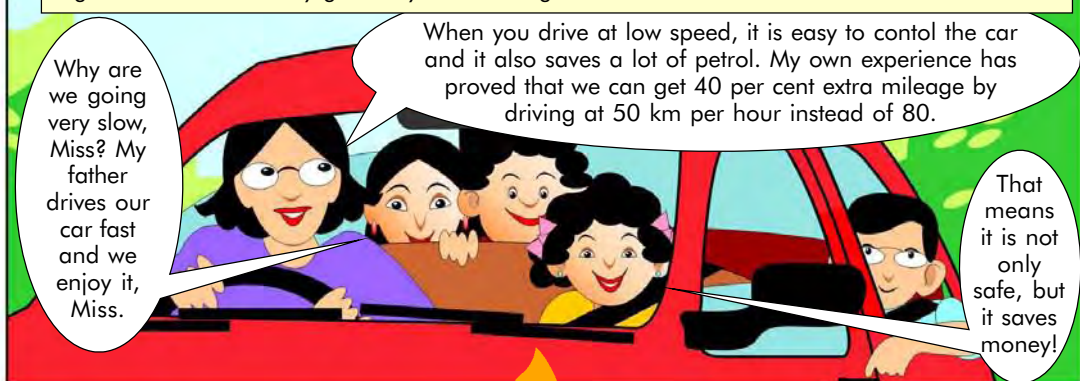
The teacher has brought her car. She opens the bonnet and checks the engine oil and water in the radiator. She tops up the radiator with water.

Children, keep all your bags, lunch packs, and other things in the boot.



Goes round the car and checks all the 4 tyres. Opens the boot and checks whether it has the tool kit. Checks the spare tyre by pressing it.

8 a.m. The kids and the teacher put their seat belts on. The teacher starts the car without raising the engine; takes a quick check at the indicator lights (left, right and reverse) and the horn. Then she begins to move the car by gradually accelerating. The car seems to be slower than most vehicles.



Why are we going very slow, Miss? My father drives our car fast and we enjoy it, Miss.

When you drive at low speed, it is easy to control the car and it also saves a lot of petrol. My own experience has proved that we can get 40 per cent extra mileage by driving at 50 km per hour instead of 80.

That means it is not only safe, but it saves money!

Whenever the teacher sees a speed breaker, instead of applying the brakes suddenly, she gradually slows down the vehicle in advance so that she needs to press the brake pedal only mildly.

When my mother drives, she would apply the brakes suddenly. The jerks always amuse us.

Jaya, sudden braking causes more wear and tear to both the brakes and tyres. It also wastes a lot of energy as heat.

Does it mean that we can save money here, too?



Exactly. Brakes and tyres will last longer if we press the brake pedal smoothly, instead of slamming it.

As they travel, the car goes at a steady speed. When they reach the picnic spot the teacher slows down the car, shifts to lower gears very smoothly, and applies a mild brake and brings the car to a halt.

The car reaches a turning. Ms Nirmala slows down the car and shifts to a lower gear.



Miss, my mother too drives in the same way. But whenever we are in a taxi or go in a bus, I've often found the drivers taking the turns fast. Isn't it dangerous, miss?

It is not only dangerous, it can also consume fuel unnecessarily. When you slow down a car, or speed it up, it is always safe to use specific gears meant to be used in specific speed ranges. These are given in the 'Instructions Manual' which we get when we buy a car.



Children, here we are!

It is so nice, miss. You showed us how to drive properly and save money. We'll tell our parents so that they too will drive as you drive. When we become old enough to drive cars, we'll remember to follow all these rules. Thank you, miss.

That's great. I'm very happy that you've learnt a lot during this trip. Hope you enjoyed the trip.

Yes, Miss. No doubt about that.

The End

Here's a Quiz to test your Energy IQ

1. Most of the energy we use originally comes from

- a) sun b) air c) soil d) oceans

2. Electrical energy can be produced from

- a) mechanical energy
b) chemical energy
c) radiant energy
d) all of the above

3. Which fossil fuel is refined to produce gasoline?

- a) natural gas b) coal
c) petroleum d) propane

4. In a nuclear power plant, uranium atoms

- a) combine and give off heat energy
b) split and give off heat energy
c) burn and give off heat energy
d) split and give off electrons

5. Natural gas is transported mainly by

- a) pipelines b) trucks
c) barges d) all three equally

6. Global warming focuses on an increase in the level of gas in the atmosphere. Which gas?

- a) ozone b) sulphur dioxide
c) carbon dioxide d) nitrous oxide

7. Why are solar, biomass, geothermal, wind, and hydropower energy all called renewable sources of energy?

- a) They are clean and free to use
b) can be converted directly into heat and electricity
c) can be replenished by nature in a short period of time
d) do not produce air pollution

8. Electricity is the movement of

- a) atoms b) molecules
c) electrons d) neutrons

9. How much of the energy by burning coal reaches the consumer as electricity?

- a) one-third b) one-half
c) three-quarters d) nine-tenths

Answers :

- 1) A The energy in biomass, wind, solar energy, and fossil fuels originally came from the sun.
- 2) D Electrical energy can be produced from all three: mechanical energy, chemical energy, and radiant energy.
- 3) C Petroleum
- 4) B Uranium atoms split and give off heat energy.
- 5) A Pipelines transport most of the natural gas.
- 6) C Carbon dioxide burning fossil fuels is focused on as a contributor to global warming.
- 7) C Renewable fuels can be replenished by nature in a short period of time.
- 8) C Electrons move to provide electricity.
- 9) A 33 per cent efficiency rating.



Tips on **Oil saving**

You can save money while reducing both fuel consumption and air pollution by following some of the tips listed here. Whichever steps you choose will depend on your own particular circumstances, but any of them will reduce your expenditure on gasoline.

DRIVING

- Avoid rapid acceleration; most horsepower (consumes a lot of gas) is built into cars for acceleration; relatively little power (and thus fuel) is required to maintain speed.
- Avoid hard braking and sudden stops. Stay alert and anticipate traffic lights, stop signs and merges. Use turn signals. Traffic will move more smoothly, which saves fuel for everyone.
- When starting out, shift up to the next gear as soon as possible without straining the engine.
- Drive slowly. One study reported that for all vehicles tested there was at least 20 per cent loss in fuel economy as cruising speed was increased from 55 to 75 mph.
- Use the clutch only when you change gears. Riding the clutch causes loss of energy and damages clutch-linings.
- Use cruise control on highway trips.
- For any stop you expect to last more than a minute, shut off your engine rather than letting it idle.

FUEL AND MAINTENANCE

- Replace air and fuel filters regularly as instructed by your vehicle's maintenance manual; change air filter more often if driving in dusty conditions.
- Keep engine properly tuned.
- Do not buy "aggressive" tread tyres if you do not need them.
- Keep tyres properly inflated and wheels aligned.
- Store emergency fuel supply or fuel for gasoline-fueled power equipment in sealed, airtight containers, and it will still be usable in another season.



Reasons and Tips for conserving Energy

There are many reasons for conserving energy. Some of these are :

1. To reduce the expenditure on electricity, gasoline, and other forms of energy.
2. To save fossil fuels (oil, gas, coal) from depletion.
3. To reduce the "side effects" of energy usage — pollution, damage to animal habitat, ruined landscapes.
4. Even if you are not paying for the energy you use, it is still important to avoid waste of energy.

Many people who are very energy conscious at home FORGET to follow energy saving practices elsewhere. Since it is important to practise energy conservation all

24 hours, here are some hints on conserving energy at the workplace.

LIGHTING -

An easy way to save energy is to cut down on unnecessary lighting. You can:

- Turn off lights not in use.
- Use bulbs of lower wattage.
- Use natural sunlight when possible.
- Keep bulbs and fixtures clean.
- Focus light on your task.
- Use fluorescent bulbs and CFLs wherever possible.



Did you know?

In a single year, the sun delivers enough energy to meet mankind's electricity consumption some 10,000 times over.

You may be able to advise those who make lighting or maintenance decisions in your building. Use fluorescent bulbs. Avoid the need for lighting at night or when no work goes on, like on holidays.





You can do something to stop the trend of species getting extinct and destruction of habitat. With some education and determination on your part, you can make a lot of difference. Read about how you can avoid harming wildlife.

Protect Wildlife

PROVIDE A HOME

Plants and animals have always co-existed. Animals have found shelter in forests and jungles. Birds build their nests in trees. The butterflies get their food from wildflowers. Bushes and marshes have harboured millions of varieties of insects. Once man began invading forests and jungles, killing animals and birds and cutting down trees, the ecology got threatened and slowly species became extinct one after another.

We can help change this situation. How?

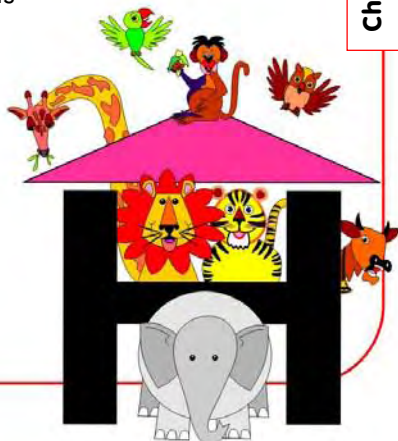
- Help the living beings survive by not attacking them
- Provide them homes in national parks, sanctuaries and natural reserves.
- Put up a bird house or bat house in human habitats.

MAKE YOUR YARD SAFE

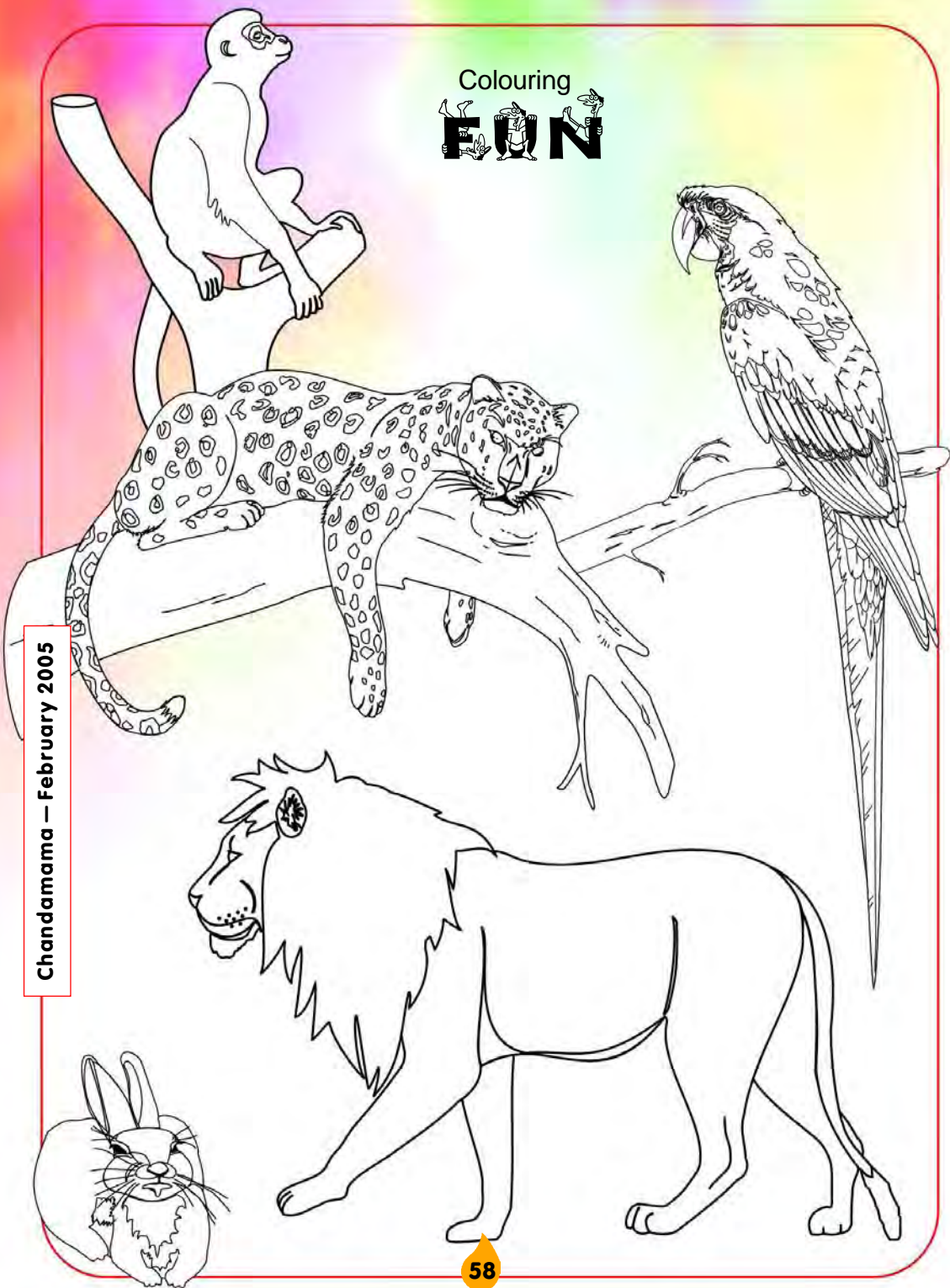
If you want to clear your compound for gardening or use it for other purposes, leave patches of bush and old trees so that the living beings will not be disturbed.

When wind or birds carry away from your garden non-native seeds, these invading plants might force out the original grasses, flowers, shrubs, and trees. When a certain tree disappears, the insects that rely on it will also vanish. The birds depending on those insects for food and that tree for nesting will go elsewhere, and the mammals that eat the birds will leave, too.

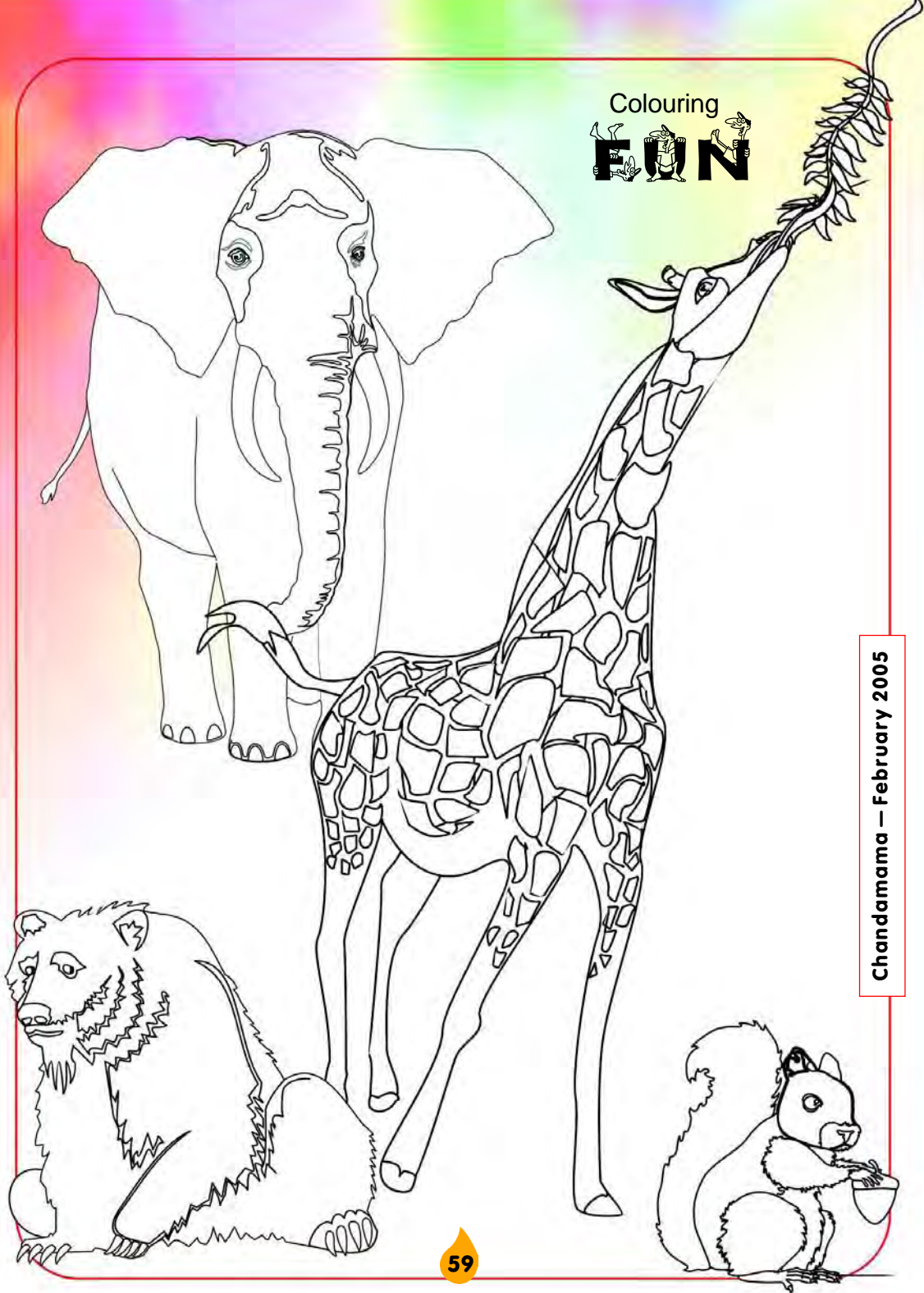
Native plants, however, will attract native birds, butterflies, and insects, and possibly threatened species. If you do your part to check foreign species, you will be helping to protect wildlife. Composting in your garden will also reduce your garbage, benefit your plants, and eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers, which can only harm your local wildlife.



Colouring
FUN



Chandamama — February 2005



JOIN THE DOTS

Join 1 to 33 and find out the hidden picture.



Chandamama — February 2005



SPOT THEM OUT

These two pictures may appear identical but there are a few differences. Happy spotting!

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Petroleum Conservation Research Association

"Sanrakshan Bhavan", 10, Bhikaiji Cama Place, New Delhi-110 066

Phone : 26198856 Fax : 26109668

Northern Region :

Chief Regional Co-ordinator, "Sanrakshan Bhavan", 10, Bhikaiji Cama Place,
New Delhi-100 066. Phone : 26198753, 26182161 Fax : 26109668

Eastern Region :

Chief Regional Co-ordinator, Everest House (2nd Floor), 46-C, Chowringhee Road,
Kolkata-700 071. Phone : 22887250 / 22881913 Fax : 22880763

Western Region :

Chief Regional Co-ordinator, C-5, Keshva Building (Ground Floor), Bandra-Kurla Complex,
Bandra East, Mumbai-400 051. Phone : 26592587 / 26592181 Fax : 26590034

Southern Region :

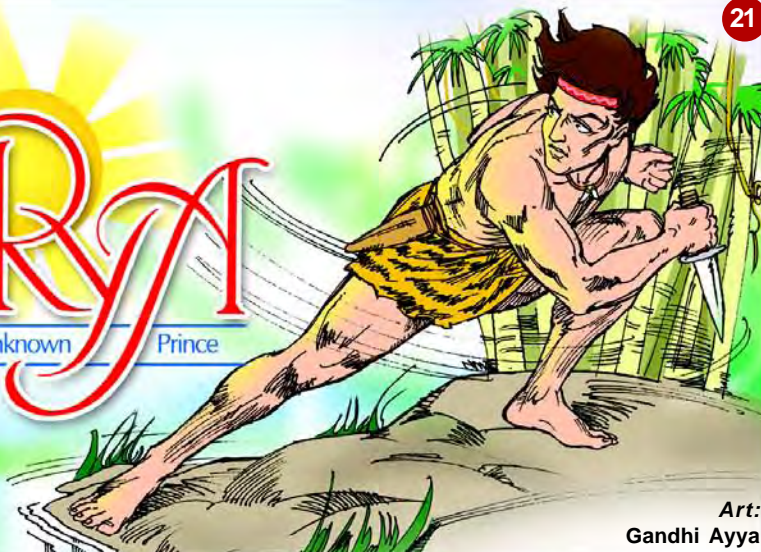
Chief Regional Co-ordinator, TMB Mansion (1st Floor), 739, Anna Salai,
Chennai-600 002. Phone : 28521662 / 28520417 Fax : 28521662

The idol of Kanakadurga, dug out of the ruins of an old temple in Jainagar, and now with the Chieftain, is to be installed in a new temple. The usurper, Vir Singh, has an eye on the idol, more for its gold than anything else. Commander Jabar Singh and soldiers surround the Chieftain's palace. To avert bloodshed, he allows the soldiers to break the floor and take away the idol. As it is being rowed away in a boat, there is a strong wind. The idol mysteriously vanishes from the boat.

ARYA

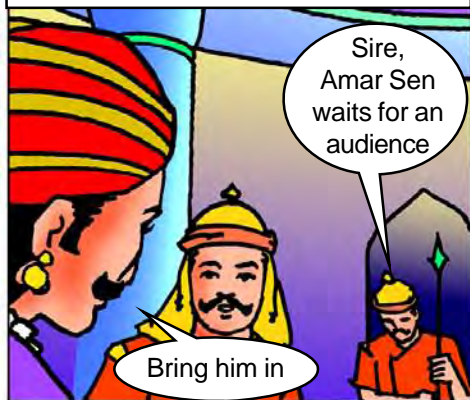
The Mystery of the Unknown Prince

21

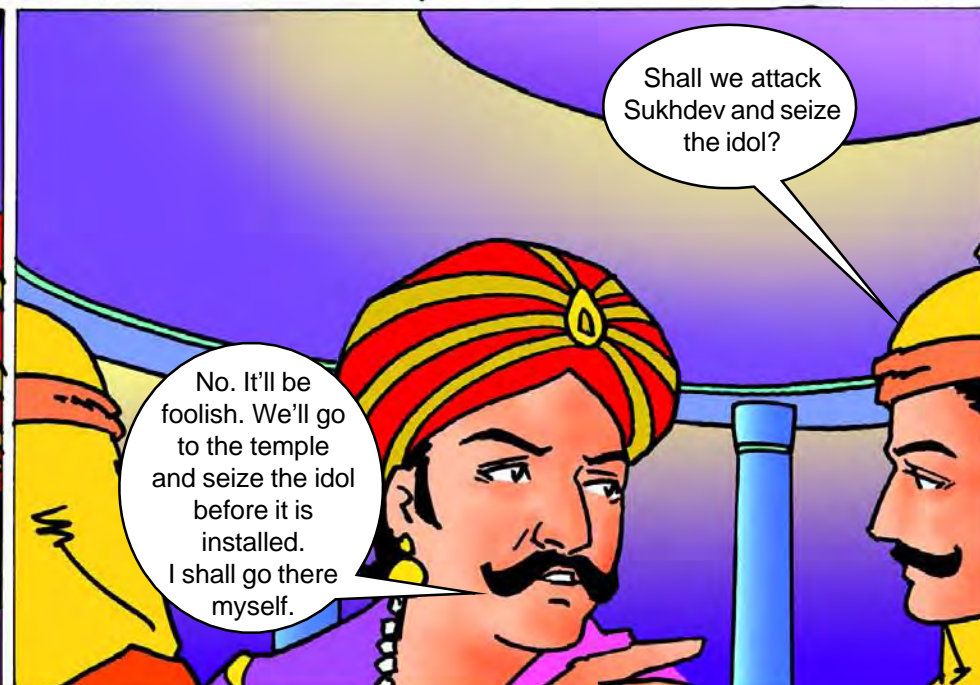


Art:
Gandhi Ayya

While Vir Singh and Jabar Singh are in conversation when...



The chief spy enters.



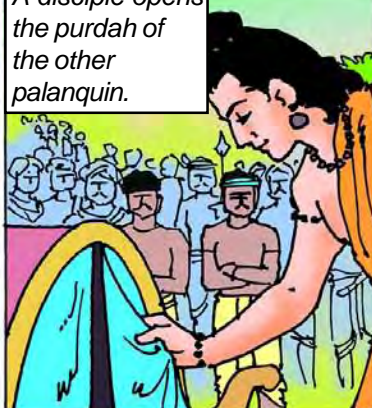
A jubilant crowd proceeds to the temple. Behind Sukhdev walk hermit Jayanand and three disciples. Following them are two palanquins escorted by bodyguards of the Chieftain. The procession stops in front of the temple.



From one palanquin comes out the Chieftain's daughter Sukanya.



A disciple opens the purdah of the other palanquin.



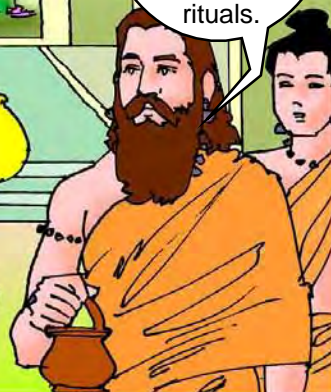
He takes out the idol of Kanakadurga and walks towards the temple.



O Devi Mahamaye!

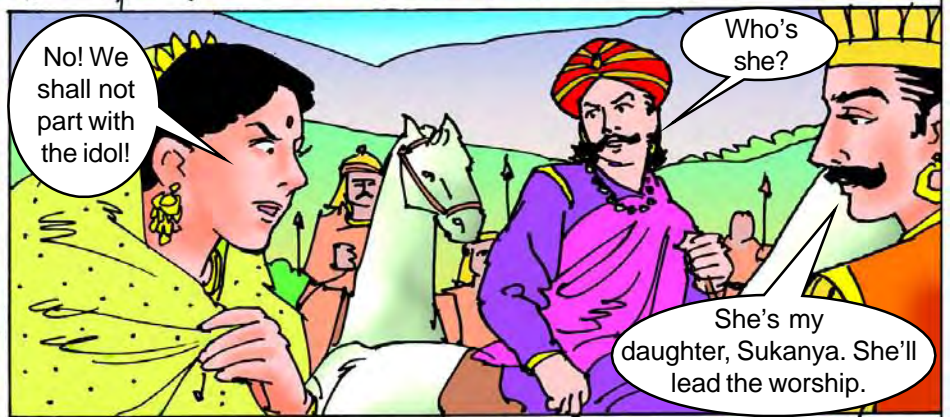
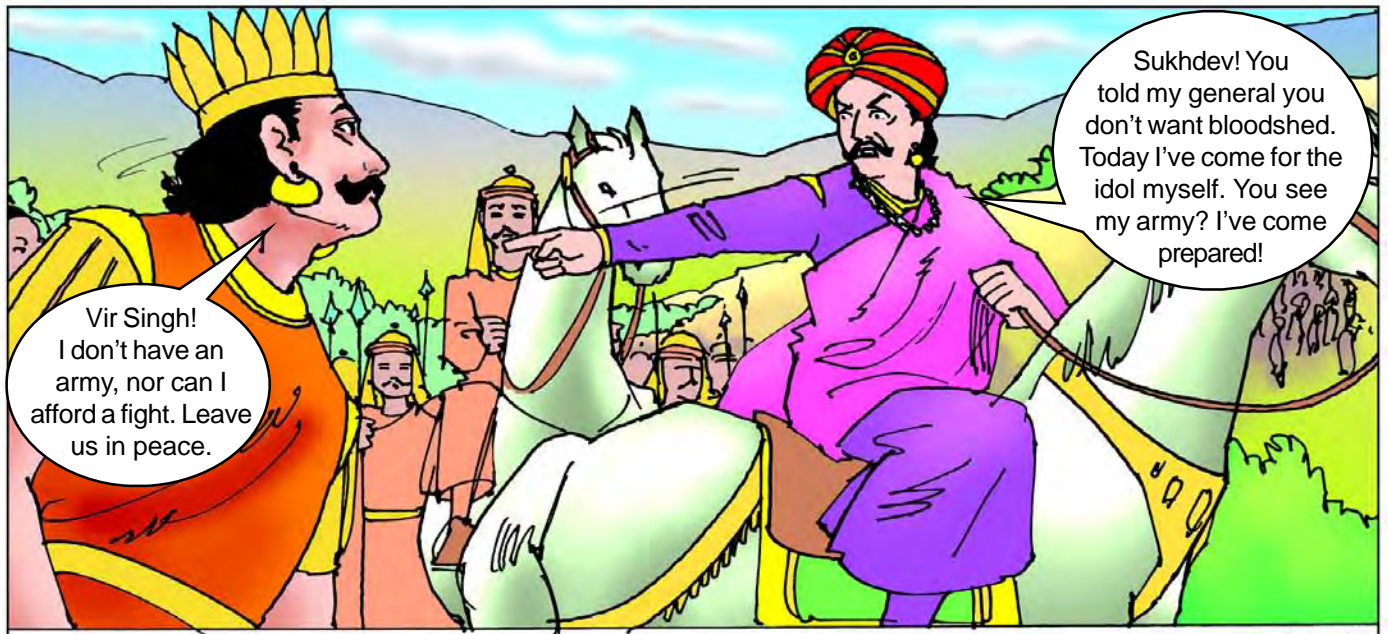


After installing it, tell me and I shall perform the rituals.



STOP!
The idol should not be installed!

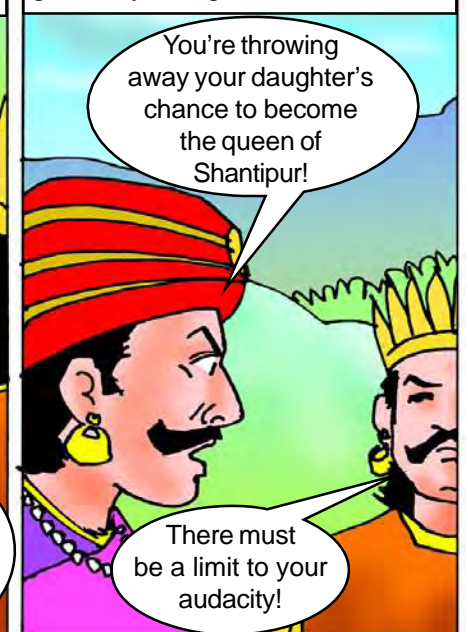


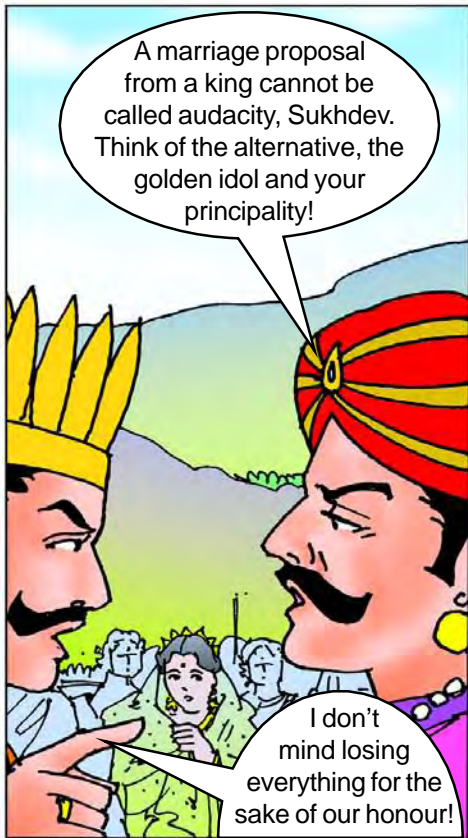


Vir Singh dismounts. He suddenly changes his tactics.



The smile on Vir Singh's face gives way to anger.





A marriage proposal from a king cannot be called audacity, Sukhdev. Think of the alternative, the golden idol and your principality!

I don't mind losing everything for the sake of our honour!

On hearing the raised voices, one of the disciples come out and goes to Sukanya and whispers to her. And then...



Go and tell your father.

Yes, I shall.

Sukanya listens to the threats posed by Vir Singh.



All right, get ready to lose everything, the idol, your territory and your daughter!

Sukanya moves closer to her father. Sukhdev turns back.



Father, please agree to his proposal and save the idol!

Are you serious, Sukanya?

Sukhdev is astonished. What would have prompted his daughter to take this attitude?



What're you saying, my child?

Father, my sacrifice will benefit Jainagar.

Sukhdev notices the hermit and a disciple approaching him.



I must find out what they feel. Has the disciple anything up his sleeves!

Contd.



A DREADFUL ENCOUNTER

There was a time when ferocious tigers roamed parts of northern India, particularly the Kumaon region in the Kala Agar hills of Uttar Pradesh. Over this vast area of mountains and valleys, covered with dense forests and dotted with scores of hamlets, the man-eaters had established a reign of terror. At night fires encircled the villages and the native people moved about in large groups, fully armed and beating drums to scare away the deadly cats.

Day after day the tigers continued to snatch a man here, a woman there, and a child somewhere else. They had to satisfy their hunger. So they hunted, not deer or buffalo but human beings. By and by they had become bold and cunning, seizing their prey by night or day and avoiding traps and hunters. It seemed as though they possessed a charmed life. The human population began

dwindling at an alarming pace. So much so, soon there arose a question in the minds of the people: Finally, who would survive, man or tiger? But was there anybody who could outwit these beasts and stop the menace? There was only one hope and that hope was Edward James Corbett, simply known as Jim Corbett.

Jim Corbett was born in 1875 to British parentage in Kumaon, in the picturesque foothills of the great Himalayas, where his father was in government service. While still a young boy, lying in his bed at night, Jim would intently listen to the sounds of the jungle. Soon he learnt to imitate the cries and calls of various animals. So precisely had he mastered this art that once when he was impersonating a leopard, a hunter and a leopard both simultaneously crept towards him!

He grew up into a fine marksman and at times used



RAJSHI

to hunt to find food for the family. It was not before long that he became well known for his shooting skills and knowledge of the surrounding jungles and hills which he knew as most people know their backyards. He could detect the track and tell whether the tiger which made it was young or old, male or female, wounded or sound. Just by listening to the alarm calls of deer, monkeys and birds, he could trace the passage of the tiger through the jungle. From crushed grass on the ground he could easily guess that a tiger had stepped there merely some minutes earlier. He also had the uncanny knack to sense imminent danger.

So this brave young adventurer received urgent messages from the helpless villages oppressed by the man-eating tigers. Jim Corbett firmly believed that the tiger in its most natural state is a “large-hearted gentleman with boundless courage”. In fact, it fears man and never harms him unless provoked or forced by circumstances and necessity. But through age or injury, a tiger can no longer make the wild charge, the perfect leap, the great bite at the neck of its natural prey. It then turns for food to the slow-moving and weak human beings. It becomes a man-eater and a great menace that has to be forthwith destroyed.

So Jim Corbett arrived in the village on the extreme end of a ridge surrounded by thick forests. It had suffered more from the tyranny of the man-eater than any other hamlet in the district. The tiger’s recent victims were two women and a young man. The previous night it had killed a buffalo and dragged it away. Where? The young daring hunter followed the trail left behind by the animal and it led him deep into forest.

He soon discovered the carcass of the buffalo lying under ferns. But where was the tiger? Suddenly Corbett halted. For his uncanny sense told him that the tiger was lurking nearby. He later related, “For three or four minutes I had stood perfectly still with no thought of danger and then all at once I became aware that the tiger was looking at me from a very short range.”

Few minutes ticked by and they seemed like hours. Suddenly a bush some distance away gently stirred and the tiger emerging out of its hide, bounded up the hillside. Jim Corbett, without losing a second, swung his rifle and

took a quick shot at the “racing bouncing target”. The tiger fell backwards and tumbled downhill, roaring all the way. While the great hunter wondered what he would do when the rolling animal landed at his feet, surprisingly the tiger recovered, the roaring stopped and then as though nothing had happened it bolted up the hill and crashing through some dry bamboos it disappeared into the next valley.

The bullet had found its mark in the tiger’s leg making a minor wound, and then rebounding off a rock it had delivered a smashing blow on its jaw. The impact must have been only painful but had it not done much harm to the animal. A good chance was lost of making an end of the beast. The village folks were disappointed when they came to know that their enemy had escaped, angry and revengeful.

The following morning Jim Corbett visited the spot again and was surprised to find fresh tracks leading up to the dead buffalo. In spite of the previous day’s unpleasant experience, the tiger had indeed visited the spot again. But now how to lure it back? He had an idea. He knew that a tiger with only minor injuries would come to another tiger when it roars out its call. So filling up his lungs he gave out a perfect imitation of the tiger’s long gurgling call. At once the man-eater answered with his own fierce cry. The hunter tried again and the tiger responded and it went on for some time, call answering call. But the animal did not show up. Did he sense the danger that awaited him?

So Corbett now decided to wait for the man-eater after sun down. For, he was sure that the animal would make its appearance when it gets dark. As twilight set in, he climbed a tree and sat on a branch just eight feet above the ground. Very soon a monkey in the same tree gave out shrill cries of alarm and continued calling until nightfall. Was the tiger anywhere near? The hunter patiently waited in pitch darkness, straining his eyes and ears. He saw nothing but the shining stars above; he heard nothing but the nocturnal sounds of the jungle.

Suddenly he was startled by a stone that came rolling down the hillside and struck against the base of the tree on which he perched. Then there followed a stealthy, soft and heavy padding sound. It was unmistakably the tiger.

It was coming downhill straight for his tree, giving out deep angry growls from time to time. Jim least expected this. It was surely a dangerous situation.

It became clear why the monkey was giving out its frantic signals before dark. From the treetop it had spotted the tiger, while the tiger had been watching Jim Corbett climb the tree. Now the man-eater was pacing below the tree, angrily growling and roaring and looking up at its would-be victim.

The hunter sat just eight feet above the ground and indeed felt unsafe. The tiger could easily have a go at him standing on its hind legs. Slowly he put his rifle between his arm and his side and his finger was ready on the trigger. Should the tiger now try to reach him, it will have to first meet the muzzle of the gun. A menacing growl came from the beast. Fortunately, it had some other plans. It settled down to eat the kill while Jim Corbett sat listening to the sound of bones cracking under its sharp teeth.

Soon dawn broke over the hills. Suddenly in the fresh stillness of the morning were heard the loud clear calls of the townsfolk, “cooe” “cooe”. The sound frightened the tiger and breaking away from its meal, it began to prance up the hill at top speed. The vigilant hunter, focusing his night-strained eyes, took aim and pulled the trigger. The bullet swished through the air and found its mark. Giving a mighty roar, the tiger turned back and angrily charged straight towards the tree where Jim Corbett still sat on its branch. The beast looked up with vengeance and malice and sprang at him.

At this critical juncture a cool head and a steady aim would decide between life and death. Corbett with rare presence of mind fired. The rifle cracked and the bullet pierced the chest of the tiger while it was still air borne. It fell backwards and went crashing, splashing into little streamlets turning the water red and tumbled down into the valley.

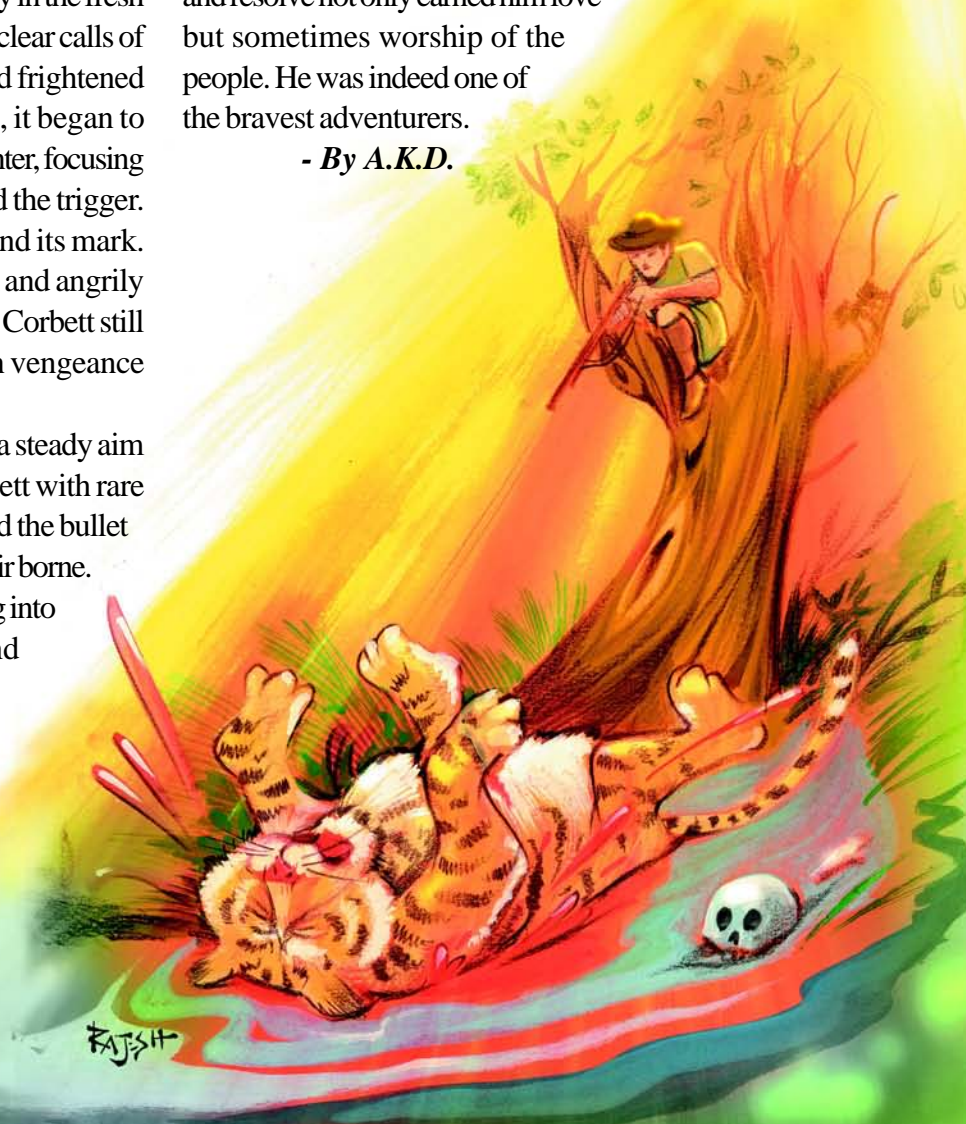
The village folks were jubilant and heaved a deep sigh of relief when they saw the crafty, bold, man-eating tiger lying dead in front of them. One old man walked up to Jim Corbett and saluting him said in a quiet,

choked voice, “I’m content now, Sahib, for you have avenged my son.” The poor man’s only son had been the tiger’s last human victim.

In a period of thirty-five years, between 1906 and 1941 Jim Corbett had hunted down at least a dozen man-eating tigers. It is estimated that the total number of men, women and children these man-eaters killed during their reign of terror would not be less than 1,500. The first man-eater that Corbett had hunted down, the Champawat tigress, alone was responsible for 436 documented deaths.

Jim Corbett was a passionate wildlife conservationist and played a leading role in establishing India’s first national park in the Kumaon hills. In recognition of one who had so selflessly dedicated his life to the service of the simple folks of the region, the wildlife sanctuary was later named after him as the Corbett National Park. He was modest, friendly and unassuming. His courage and resolve not only earned him love but sometimes worship of the people. He was indeed one of the bravest adventurers.

- By A.K.D.





ON TO RUTLAND ISLAND...

(This story, as well as the earlier piece "Water, water everywhere" in the January issue, were written before the recent earthquake and tsunami tragedy which overtook the Andaman and Nicobar Islands causing loss of many lives and much devastation. A lesson that we learn, though belatedly, is: there are several kinds of protection that nature has provided, like the mangrove forests, coral reefs, and the beaches themselves which act as the first barrier between the sea and land. -Author)

This was going to be another first for Hari; a ride in a country boat in the Andaman Islands. John, senior scientist at the Institute for Island Ecology (IIE), and Uncle Pao, an expert boatman, were to accompany him on this trip to Rutland Island. "Rutland is a unique island," said John, pointing to the island that was visible across the bay from where the IIE was located. "There are no human settlements on it," he continued, "it has very good forest cover and water resources, and the beaches on the island are important sea turtle nesting sites."

Hari was obviously delighted. The idea was to spend the night on the beach looking for nesting turtles. "We might encounter some turtles that come to the beach for

nesting," said John, as they set off to the jetty to board the boat that would take them to Rutland.

As they reached the jetty, Hari saw a small group of people whom he recognised as tourists. John, however, was not happy at what they were doing. The group of four teenagers were filling a huge bag with a whole lot of shell and pieces of coral that lay scattered all along. "You can't do that. Don't you know that coral protects the coast from sea erosion?" John told the group rather sternly. "Not only does this harm the coral reef and coastal ecology," he said, "it's even against the law."

John's personality and stern voice had an immediate impact. "We didn't know. We're sorry," said one of the boys, as he quickly emptied the bag of its contents. John then turned to Hari, as they finally boarded the boat. "This is one of the biggest problems with these tourists," he said. "They seem to think that the coral debris and shells on the beach are waste and can be collected," he concluded, as the boat came on in a stuttering kind of start.

Soon they were cruising along on the blue translucent waters of the Andaman Sea. They were just about moving out from the bay and into more open waters, when the boat whizzed past a bunch of translucent thin creatures bobbling on the surface of the water.

"Jellyfish!" Hari yelled, with his hand pointing towards the right.

"No, Hari," John explained, "unfortunately, this is not jellyfish, but some flimsy plastic bags, that have been carelessly thrown out."



"Oh god," exclaimed Hari, "how I was fooled! I hope it's not the tourists who are responsible again," Hari said, nodding his head vigorously.

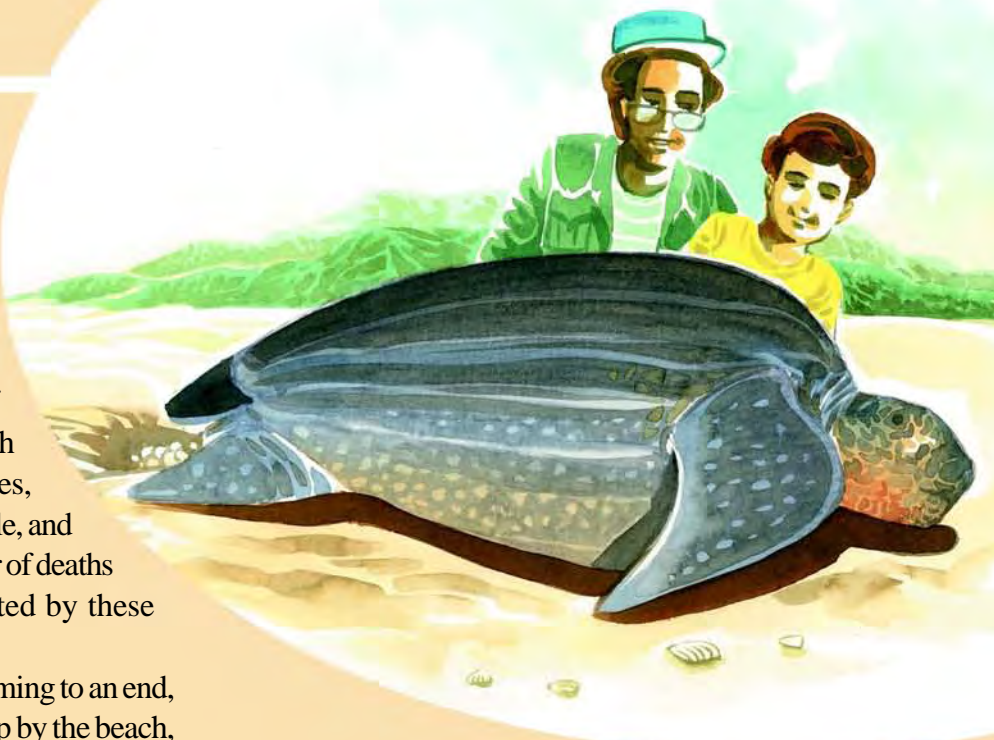
"It could be the tourists or it could even be the local people," responded John. "Either way it's undesirable," he continued, "as a number of creatures of the sea get fooled as well. You see, jellyfish are food for a number of marine creatures, the giant leatherback sea turtle for example, and there are regular reports of a large number of deaths because plastic bags have been ingested by these creatures taking them to be jellyfish."

The short journey to Rutland was coming to an end, and by the time the group had set up camp by the beach, the sun had begun to dip behind the western horizon. An exciting night lay ahead, and Hari could hardly wait. The plan was to have an early dinner, and sleep till about 10 p.m. That's when the tide would start rising and hopefully with it the turtles, too, would start coming to the beach to lay their eggs.

It was around 10 that Hari felt a gentle nudge on his left shoulder. Reluctantly he opened his eyes to see Uncle Pao peering over him. "Kachua!" Uncle said softly and Hari almost leaped out of his bed. Just about 20 m from where the group of three had lied down, there was a giant leatherback turtle, digging away laboriously with her hind flippers. Hari watched transfixed. For about an hour the turtle dug and when the long cylindrical hole was about a foot deep, she laid her eggs into it; about a hundred of them, all sparkling white, each one a little smaller than a tennis ball.

For Hari the atmosphere and the experience was most humbling and delightful, a privileged peek into the life of one of the world's most fascinating and threatened creatures. The female turtle then covered her nest with sand from the beach and started her short journey back to the ocean.

Suddenly, the attention of all three was distracted by the barks of dogs in the distance along the beach. "Run!" shouted John as he rushed in the direction from where the sounds came. All the others followed and stopped



behind John near another small dug up hole in the beach sand. A little distance from here was another turtle, an olive ridley this time who had laid her eggs, covered her nest and was on her journey back to the sea.

The dug up hole John was looking at was not the work of the turtle, but that of a feral dog which was actually digging up the eggs the turtle had just laid. "Thank God," exclaimed John, "we reached on time, otherwise that dog would have dug up and destroyed the entire nest." He was, in fact, visibly disturbed. "Something has to be done about the dogs, otherwise these turtles stand no chance," he muttered to himself. He then looked up and said something that pleasantly surprised Hari.

"Thanks to you, Hari," he sighed, "we could save this nest from being destroyed today. You see, feral dogs on this island are a big menace, and regularly destroy turtle eggs and sometimes even attack these harmless creatures. We need to keep a constant watch, and if there are more sensitive visitors like you who are interested in seeing and learning about these creatures, it helps us in our work."

Hari was, of course, feeling bad for the turtles, but he was also happy that even as a tourist, he had been able to contribute a bit to their protection on this remote beach in the Andaman islands.

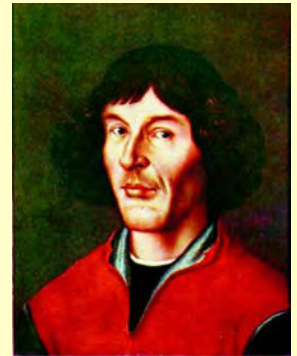
- Pankaj Sekhsaria
Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group



- By Rosscote
Krishna Pillai

FEBRUARY BORN–NICOLAUS COPERNICUS

The first astronomer who rose to fame before Kepler, Galileo and Newton, by placing the sun at the centre of our planetary system, was Nicolaus Copernicus. He was born on February 19, 1473 in the small town of Thorn, in Poland. His father was a merchant. His mother was a German from a well-to-do family. Nicolaus lost his father when he was only ten; he was then taken under his care by his maternal uncle.



He sent Nicolaus to the famous University of Cracow in Poland to study mathematics, astronomy and painting. He had a flair for astronomy and was well-equipped in its fundamentals in the course of three years. By then his uncle, who had become a prince-bishop, wanted his nephew too to become a priest. In 1497 he sent him to a school in Bologna in Italy. There Copernicus studied canon law and medicine, and mastered Greek and the writings of Plato and Aristotle.

Coming back from Italy, he became a canon, but his intense desire to probe the heavens and gain mastery over astronomy prodded him to go to study at the great University of Padua in Italy. By the time Copernicus returned to his homeland in 1503, he had gained all the knowledge of the day in mathematics, astronomy, medicine and theology. He joined a cathedral as a canon under his uncle. There he used his medical knowledge and skill to serve the poor.

Copernicus was convinced that Aristotle and Ptolemy had not explained the irregular motion of the planets and in determining the orbits of the sun, the moon and the planets. He questioned their concept about an unmoving Earth at the centre of the universe and the “seven wanderers”—the Sun, Moon and the five planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn then known to man, and all the stars embedded in a hollow globe, like jewels moving in circles around the Earth.

Copernicus had the courage of conviction to formulate a new system of the Universe with the sun at its centre and the planets, including the earth attended by the moon, going round the sun. But he regarded the sun as immovable and as the most powerful among the heavenly bodies. He located the five known planets around the sun in their correct order. He even suggested that the earth rotated on its own axis from the west to east.

Copernicus was not too eager to publish his views lest they antagonised the Church. But his disciple, George Rheticus, also a scientist, published *De Revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres) in 1543. Copernicus saw the book on the day he died, May 24, 1543. The Church officially banned it in 1616 as a “Forbidden Book”; however, the ban was lifted in 1835.

It is now widely acknowledged that the Scientific Revolution began with Copernicus.

VIVEKANANDA INSPIRES TATA



Swami Vivekananda even today, 102 years after his passing away in 1902, is remembered and revered all over India. How many of us know that the Swamiji had sown the idea for two of India's most outstanding establishments in the field of science and technology, namely the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore and the Tata Iron & Steel Company at Jamshedpur, in the mind of their founder, Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata? The event when the Swamiji inspired Tata was recently recalled



by the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam: Vivekananda and Tata met in 1901 on board a ship going from Bombay to Europe. The Swamiji asked Tata what his mission was. When Tata said he intended to bring the steel industry to India, Vivekananda is reported to have remarked: "It is indeed a great mission. However, I would like to caution you. Whatever money you spend to get the process of making steel, simultaneously you should learn the metallurgical science of making steel also. I wish you started an Institute to do advanced research on the subject..."

Dr. Abdul Kalam comments on these inspiring words thus: "What a prophetic statement!" India was then a backward country. The President recalls: "Tata could not get the technology from the U.K. But he got the know-how... after crossing the Atlantic, from the USA. Later, Tata established the Iron and Steel company at Jamshedpur.... He also donated one-sixth of his property to establish a research Institute in Bangalore, now known as the Indian Institute of Science. This incident demonstrates the vision of Vivekananda—the vision of a strong, developed India."

QUOTATIONS

"Science is the fusion of man's aesthetic and intellectual function devoted to the representation of nature. It is, therefore, the highest form of creative art."

- **C.V.Raman**

"Fortunately science, like nature to which it belongs, is neither limited by time or by space. It belongs to the world, and is of no country and no age. The more we know, the more we feel our ignorance; the more we feel how much remains unknown."

- **Sir Humphrey Davy**

Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty- a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture, without appeal to any part of our weaker nature, without the gorgeous trappings of paintings or music, yet sublimely pure, and capable of a tern perfection such as only the greatest art can show."

- **Bertrand Russell**

SCIENCE QUIZ

- Who gave the name 'rubber' to the gum of the Hevea tree?
a. Priestly b. Lavoisier
c. Scheele d. Bunsen
- What is a flying fox?
a. bird b. lizard c. bat d. dinosaur
- Which is the deepest point in the Indian Ocean?
a. Marianas Trench b. Tuscarora Trench
c. Java Trench d. Mindanao Trench
- How many teeth does the Blue Whale have?
a. 32 b. 48 c. none d. 60

Answers: 1.a. Priestly, 2.c. bat,
3.c. Java Trench, 4.c. none



Newsflash

AUTO, NOW A MUSEUM PIECE

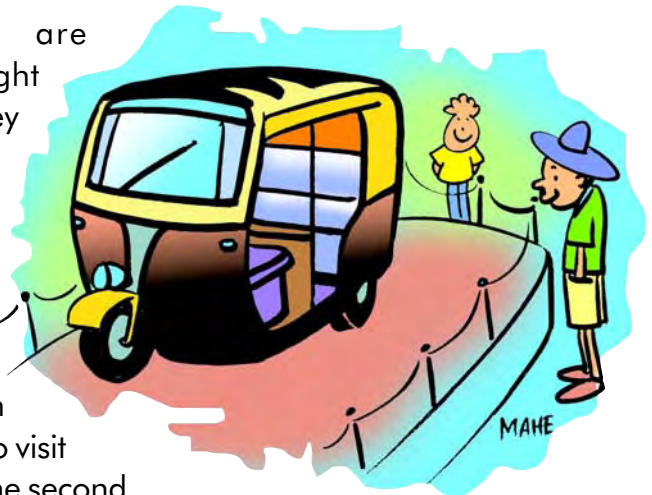


STONES FROM EYES

Eleven years old Mandip Pokhrel, of Anandnagar in Janakpur district of Nepal, has neither learnt magic nor does he practise any magic. But when he sheds tears, what come out are tiny stones, almost the size of rice grains! He need not have any cause for sorrow or joy, but he can be seen shedding stones every now and then. Medicines have not provided either relief or remedy, and doctors are baffled.

Now the parents are contemplating traditional (read Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani) treatment. The silver lining is, the boy does not complain of any pain in his eyes.

Autorickshaws are a common sight in Indian cities. They are not found in use in any other country in the world. No wonder, the Science Museum in London got interested in keeping an auto on display! If you were to visit the Museum, go to the second floor, and you can see the auto with an Indian registration number. But don't you want to know what prompted the London Museum to consider the vehicle as a prestigious exhibit? Fuel efficiency! Its 145cc two-stroke engine gives more than 60 miles per gallon. Incidentally, the Science Museum was set up in 1857 and has as many as 300,000 exhibits.



MOSQUE FOR WOMEN



Devout Muslims are expected to go for prayers five times a day when they hear the call from a mosque. However, women do not generally go to mosques, but observe the ritual at home. While discussions are going on whether Muslim women can visit mosques, Pudukkottai district in Tamil Nadu has taken the first step to construct a mosque exclusively for women. The place chosen is Parambur, which will also have a school for Muslim girls. The initiative is being taken by the Chaya Women's Federation.



THE KING HAD A SPECIAL NOSE

LEGENDS FROM OTHER LANDS (POLAND)

Till a hundred years ago the people of northern Poland would point at a small valley overshadowed by several kinds of trees and say, “There stood, once upon a time, Valdimir’s miraculous apple tree. How much we wish it were still there!”

Today even the green valley has disappeared, giving way to a town. However, Vladimir and his apple tree live on in the country’s legends.

A prophecy had informed Vladimir’s mother that she would be blessed with a son who would be somebody unusual. But she must choose to see her child either rich or happy. She could pray to the Lord to endow her son with the luck she would like him to have.

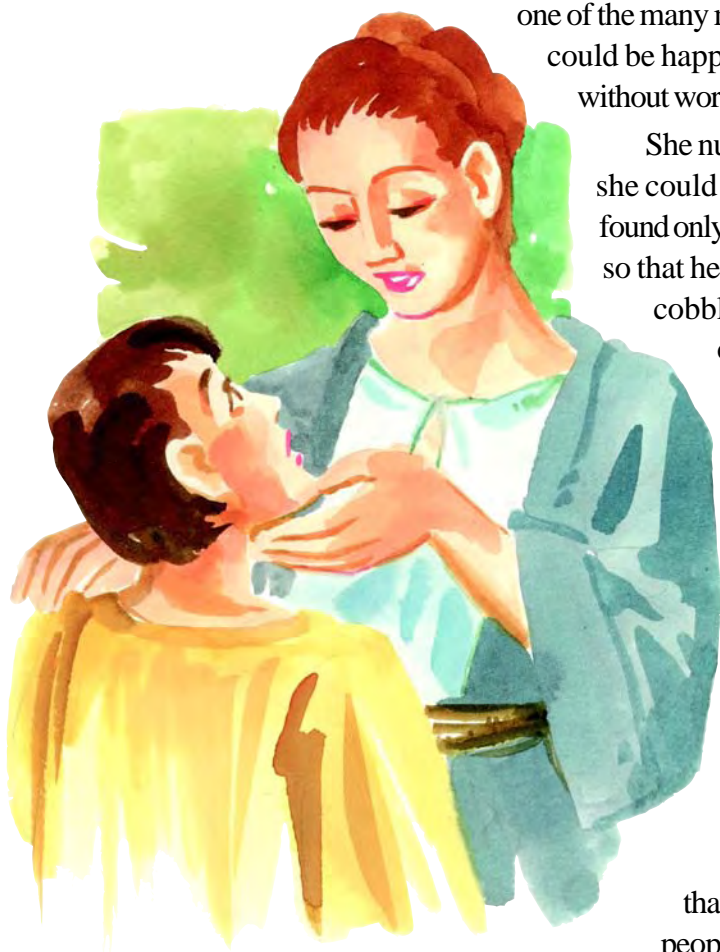
The young lady was wise enough to decide in favour of a happy child. For wealth was only one of the many means through which one could obtain happiness. If the child could be happy without it, why bother about wealth which never comes without worries?

She nursed her son, Vladimir, with great love. Since she was poor, she could not send her son to a school which, in any case, was to be found only in the distant town. She, therefore, sent him to a master cobbler so that he could earn the art of making shoes. The boy lived with the cobbler for a while, but one day returned to his mother and complained that those who ordered for shoes were the rich. The poor did not have the means to buy shoes. He would not like to take up a trade that served only the rich.

The fond mother nodded. She then talked to a master tailor who agreed to take Vladimir as an apprentice. The boy worked with him for a few days, but went back to his mother and said only the rich people ordered for tailored clothes and he would not like to serve them.

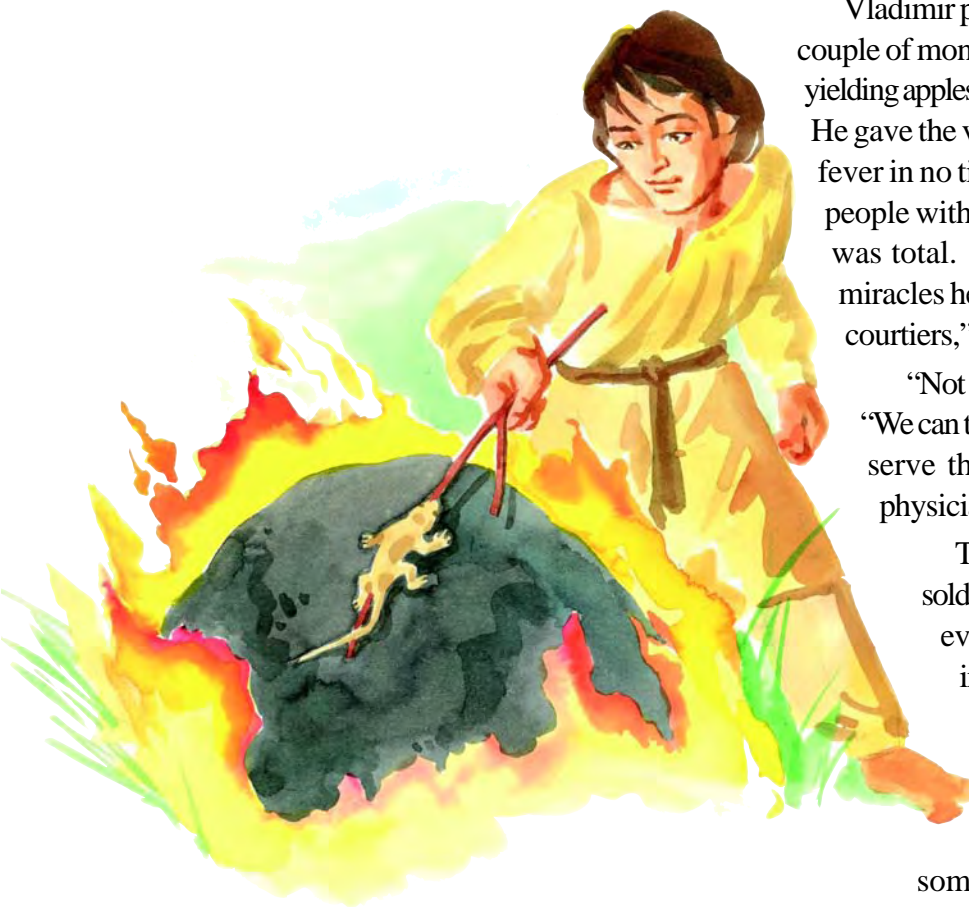
Next, the mother sent him to an expert who forged swords. They were in great demand because there were frequent wars between the kingdoms and the sword-makers made good profit.

But Vladimir could not live with his new master for more than a week. “Mother, must I make things that are used for killing people? Why should I?” he asked with some anguish.



“You need not, my son, but I cannot show you any other way for earning a living. Well, you can look after the cattle, lead them into the meadows and bring them back home, like the other village boys,” said the mother.

Vladimir followed his mother’s advice. He was happy to roam in the green fields, to sing and play hide and seek with the shepherds. One day, at noon, he noticed that a fire had encircled a small rock. Further he saw a lizard on the rock trying to escape the fire but unable to succeed. He rescued it with the help of a stick. At once the lizard changed into an old woman and thanked him and gave him a sapling. “Plant it in your garden. The apple that it would produce would have the miraculous power of healing the sick.” The woman then changed into a lizard once again and slipped into a bush.



Vladimir planted the sapling close to his window. In a couple of months it grew into a handsome tree and began yielding apples. Vladimir’s mother was suffering from fever. He gave the very first apple to her. She was cured of her fever in no time. Thereafter Vladimir treated so many people with the apples and his success in curing them was total. No wonder the king should hear of the miracles he performed. “Let’s have him as one of our courtiers,” proposed the king.

“Not necessary, my lord,” said the royal physician. “We can transfer his plant to our garden and that would serve the purpose.” The minister who was the physician’s brother-in-law supported the proposal.

The king passed the necessary order and his soldiers went and dug up Vladimir’s plant without even speaking a word to him and replanted it in the royal garden. But, to the disappointment of everybody, the plant stopped producing any fruit. It was most embarrassing for the physician and the minister. The king asked them, with a good deal of anger, to do something about it. In fact, he had contracted

cold and was waiting for the apple from the magic

tree to cure him. In any case, his own physician had not been able to bring him relief through his bitter pills and colourful mixtures.

Meanwhile Vladimir, feeling dejected because he could no longer help the ailing men and women who came to him, went into the meadow and sat under the tree near the rock where he had met the lizard-woman. “O kind-hearted one, will you mind appearing before me once again?” he spoke out. A whirlwind raised a column of dry leaves before him. The next moment there appeared before him the lizard-woman.

Vladimir told her of the injustice done to him by the king and his men. The lizard-woman gave him a basket filled with red apples. “Proceed to the palace and offer the apples for sale.

You'll see the fun," said the weird creature and she disappeared through a second spell of whirlwind.

Vladimir lost no time in walking down to the palace. "Will anyone buy these fruits? This will do something unexpected though I am not sure what it is," he announced. The king's men led him into the court. The king asked him if his fruit could cure cold. "Probably it could," said Vladimir. "But it could also do something more!"

The king and courtiers picked up an apple each and ate them with relish. Lo and behold, the king's nose began to grow and it became as long as a heron's beak.

"What's this?" the king shrieked in horror.

"My lord, first tell me whether you are cured of your cold or not," demanded Vladimir.

"I have such a big nose that it is difficult to trace the cold it contained," said the king.

"What's this? What is this?" cried out a dozen voices. It was quite a sight. All the courtiers had grown beak-like long noses.

"My lord, you and your worthy courtiers are looking absolutely special with special-size noses," commented Vladimir.

"But we do not wish to look so very special. How do we get back our good old humble noses?" asked the king.

"Probably only by eating the apples from the tree you stole from my garden. And it will yield the fruit only when replanted where it once stood," said Vladimir thoughtfully.

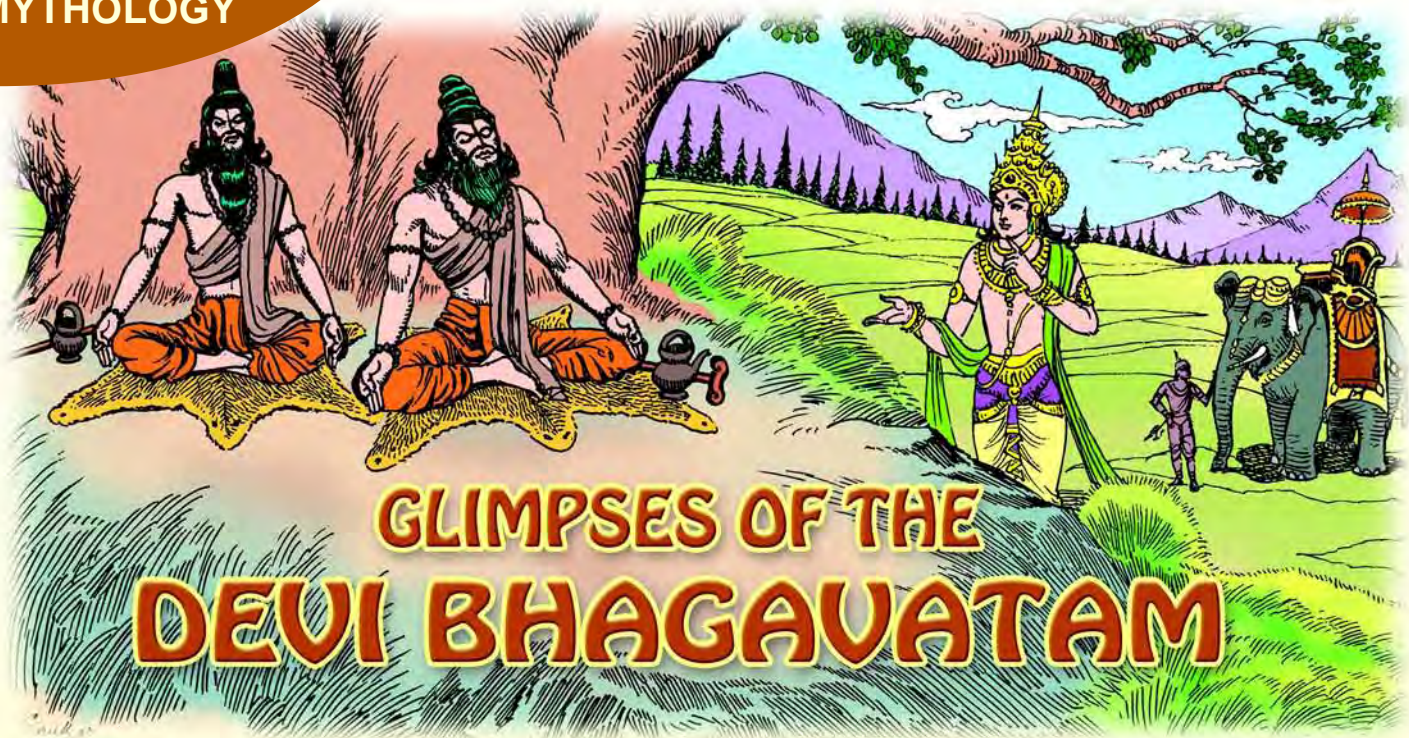
"Until then, gentlemen, you must carry your special noses wherever you go," he added.

The king arranged for the plant to be taken back to Vladimir's garden. It took a week for the tree to produce fruit. Till then neither the king nor any of his worthy courtiers moved out of the palace. Imagine the relief they found when Vladimir came with a basketful of apples from his magic tree and the king and his men ate them and their noses returned to their normal form.

Disregarding the advice of the physician and the minister, the king made Vladimir a courtier. But Vladimir took no remuneration. He was simply happy to serve the needy with his magic apples. He lived long. When he was gone, the tree stopped yielding fruit.

- By Visvvasu





Dharmu was one of those who materialised from Brahma's desire. He married the four daughters of Daksha Prajapati and they gave birth to four sons: Hari, Krishna, Nara, and Narayana. The two elder sons went away after turning ascetics early in life.

Nara and Narayana, too, went the way of their brothers. In the Himalayas, beside river Mandakini, they sat in deep meditation for a long time. Such was the power they radiated that nobody was able to go anywhere near them. They continued meditating, unmoved.

Hermits and nymphs who saw them in that state, spoke about them wherever they went. Their fame spread. The king of gods, Indra, heard about them. It was in his nature to grow jealous of anyone who practised askesis in a remarkable way. Would they usurp his supreme position?

In a bid to stop them from their endeavour, Indra first appeared before them. "O yogi brothers, wake up from your meditation. Here am I, Indra. Ask me for a boon and it shall be granted."

But Nara and Narayana remained lost in trance. Indra repeated his offer, but in vain. That angered him. He now took to wizardry. At once lions, tigers and elephants

surrounded the place and roared and trumpeted to terrify the yogis. Next, bright flames surrounded the place. Thereafter a cyclone created havoc there.

But the two brothers seemed to care two hoots for such occurrences. Indra realised that the two, chanting a particular hymn, were concentrated on the Divine Mother. Nothing could disturb anyone who chanted that *mantra*.

Indra returned to heaven and summoned the god of Love, Kamadeva and said: "Near Badarikashram, on the banks of the Mandakini, Nara and Narayana are seen engrossed in meditation and in a trance. They have already acquired much spiritual power, and I wonder how they intend using it. We ought not to let them carry on their askesis any further. I tried to scare them, but could not. You can disturb them in your own way. Haven't you foiled the efforts of so many yogis in the past? You may take the nymphs along and do the needful."

Kamadeva used to look for such assignments. But this time he kept quiet.

"Why do you look pensive?" asked Indra.

"Well, I must tell you, you're asking me to undertake a very difficult task. Yogis whom I disturbed earlier were meditating on one of the great Gods. But Nara and

14. NARA AND NARAYANA

Narayana are meditating on the Divine Mother. Anyone who does that in the proper way is not affected by my power,” explained Kamadeva.

“But you must do something about it. If you can’t achieve the purpose directly, please take recourse to some indirect methods. We cannot just shut our eyes to their endeavour!” said Indra.

Kamadeva was not enthusiastic. However, he promised to do his best.

He sent the spirit of Spring to Badarikashram immediately. Later, he went there himself, accompanied by some of the celestial nymphs.

The region where the two brothers meditated suddenly had an abundance of flowers, the cooing of birds, and a sweet breeze.

This instant change in the atmosphere surprised Nara and Narayana. They opened their eyes. Never before had the region looked so beautiful.

Was someone doing any magic? they wondered.

As soon as they opened their eyes, the nymphs began dancing before them.

The two brothers gazed at them amusingly for a while. Then they said, “You’ve done your best. Better stop now and relax. Indra is audacious enough to imagine that he can disturb us. We can, if we please, create more beautiful things!”

Narayana slapped his thigh. A maiden of indescribable beauty sprang up. Some more beauties made their appearance.

The nymphs felt ashamed. Hands folded, they said, “Pardon us, O great souls. We’ve indeed disturbed the poise of many an ascetic. But today we accept defeat. But we’re lucky in a way. Had Indra not commanded us to come

here, we would not have got a chance to behold you!”

Nara and Narayana smiled. “Take this nymph along with you,” said Narayana, “and present her to Indra. May Indra, the gods, and you all live happily. You can now go.”

“O great souls, please don’t ask us to go away. Let Urvashi and those created along with her go over to heaven and serve Indra. We’ll be happy to be here!” said the nymphs.

“What do you mean?” asked Narayana.

“Since you have put that question, we should honestly answer it. But you ought to deem it your duty to fulfil our desire. Well, we’d be happy to marry you and live here. We don’t wish to return to heaven,” said the nymphs.

“What!” cried out Narayana “Is it for this that we have been carrying on our askesis, defying the fury of nature and hurdles created by Indra?”

“Why, what is wrong with us? Who can dream of any greater happiness than marrying us and having us to serve them?” asked the nymphs.

Narayana realised that it had been a blunder on their part to have talked to the nymphs. They should have ignored them. They should not have created more beautiful nymphs to ridicule them. They had already got involved in their affairs!

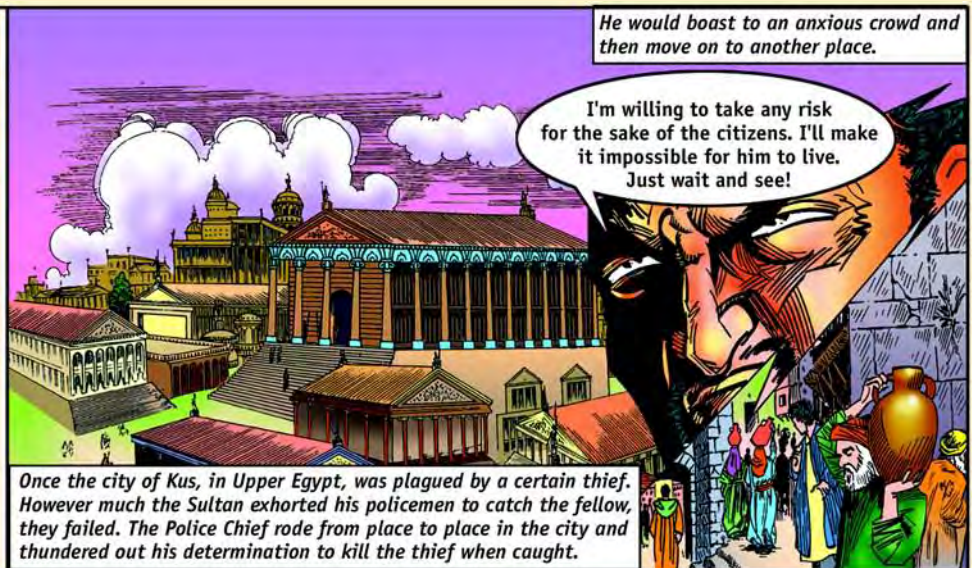
They wished to scare them away. But to get angry would be yet another mistake.

“Let’s be peaceful in our dealing with them,” Nara told Narayana. Narayana told the nymphs: “We’ll remain ascetics in this life. If we’re not disturbed again, we’ll consider having you for our wives in our next incarnation.”

The nymphs bowed to the ascetics and then left for heaven along with Urvashi.

(To continue)





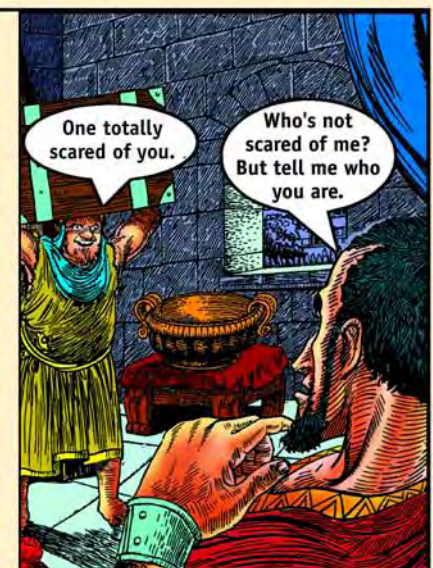
Once the city of Kus, in Upper Egypt, was plagued by a certain thief. However much the Sultan exhorted his policemen to catch the fellow, they failed. The Police Chief rode from place to place in the city and thundered out his determination to kill the thief when caught.



The police chief had already returned home and was relaxing.



Before he replied, the police chief asked the servant to leave the room.





PUZZLE DAZZLE

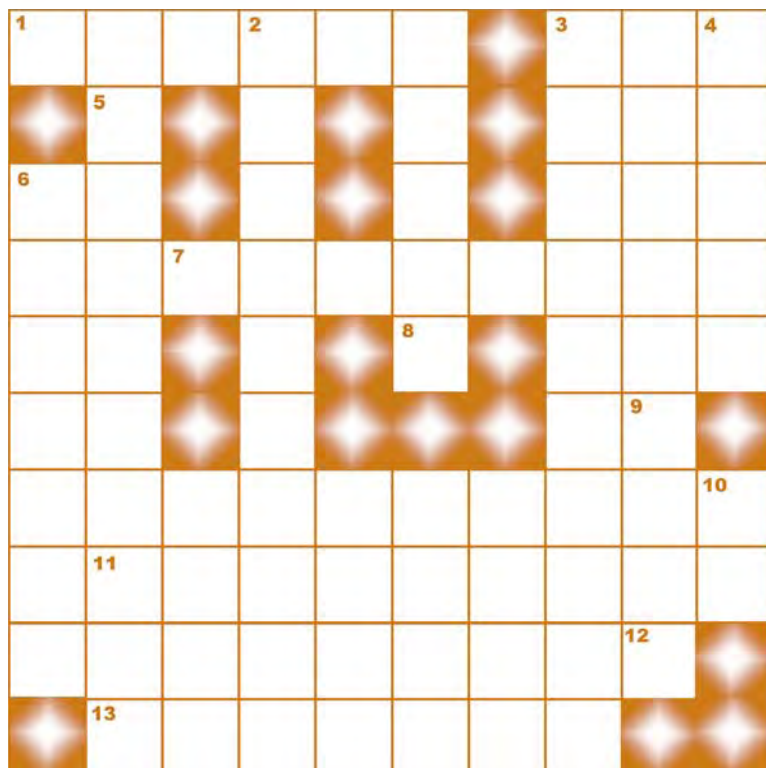


FRUITS

CROSS WORD



In the grid alongside, the names of fruits are hidden. Can you find them? Here are some clues to identify them.



CLUES:

Across:

- Common name for *Mangifera indica* (5).
- This fruit is supposed to keep the doctor away (5).
- This plant first had the name *strewberry*, which later was changed to the present name. The fruit belongs to the Rose family (10) (Reverse).
- It is a tropical tree originally from western India. It is a member of the mulberry family, and a relative of the bread fruit (9).
- It is one of the world's most unique and exotic tropical fruits, yet it can be grown in a temperate zone under controlled conditions (9) (Reverse).
- This fruit is smaller than peach, acquires a colour of orange-yellow when ripe (8).

Down:

- These fruits belong to the Vitaceae family; a famous children story is related to this fruit (6).
- These fruits are generally oblong and large,

often weighs 10 lb or more. The skin is thin. The fruit is generally eaten after cooking (10).

- This fruit is rich in Vitamin A and is believed to be a native to China. In this fruit, the stone inside is covered with a fleshy substance that is juicy, melting, and of fine flavour when mature and mellowed (7).
- These hard-pitted fruits like peaches, cherries, almonds, and apricots, belong to the genus *Prunus* of the family Rosaceae (5).
- This fruit is very rich in papain.
- It belongs to the Oleaceae family and is an important oil crop of the Mediterranean region(5) (Reverse).
- Common name for *Citrus sinensis* (6). (Reverse)

- By R Vaasugi

Answers :
1. Mango, 2. Grapes, 3. Breadfruit, 4. Peach, 5. Plums, 6. Papaya, 7. Apple, 8. Olive, 9. Orange, 10. Strawberry, 11. Jackfruit, 12. Pineapple, 13. Apricot.



A CLEVER DAUGHTER-IN-LAW

A wealthy merchant of Ramanathapuram had named his son Bhagyanathan in the hope that the boy would one day inherit all his wealth. But he turned out to be stupid. The boy always went out to play with his friends who, as he grew up, would only flatter him to his face, and laugh at him and call him a fool behind his back.

The merchant was naturally sad. "There's no use hoping that Bhagya would become something by the time we're old," he told his wife one day.

"But, then, you never took pains to get him interested in business," she countered. When they sat for dinner, the merchant told him, rather sternly, "Look here, Bhagya, from tomorrow you'll go with me to the shop. It's time you learnt business, so that you can take over from me when the time comes."

The next day, Bhagya accompanied his father to the shop where he spent most of the time chatting with the employees or the customers. The next day was a crowded day at the shop and the father did not see his son accosting someone on the road and going with him. Bhagya returned after sometime. On the third day, the boy went out but never came back.

A few days later, Bhagya's mother came with a proposition. "We'll get him married, and then we'll see more of him at home and he'll become responsible, too."

The merchant was surprised, but he thought he would accept it. "But let's give him one more chance while you search for a bride," he said. "Give him three rupees tomorrow. Let him eat something for one rupee, throw one rupee into the river, and for the third rupee, let him buy something to eat, something to drink, something to plant and grow, and something for the cow to eat."

Bhagya was surprised when his mother gave him three rupees and told him what he should do with the coins. He straight away went to the market and bought a rupee worth of *pakodas* and ate them. As he munched them, he made his way to the riverside. On reaching there, he took out one of the two coins left in his pocket, and aimed it at the river. Suddenly he withdrew his arm. Wasn't it foolish to throw a coin into a flowing river? he thought. But, then, he would be going against the directions of his mother. He went and sat on a rock where he could have a good view of the river, and pondered.



Suddenly he realised that someone was standing by his side. It was Bhageerathi, daughter of the local temple priest. She noticed that something was worrying him. "I hope you're not contemplating to jump into the river!" she said anxiously, and half jokingly.

Now, Bhagya knew her as his friend Hari's sister. "No, Bhageerathi, I was wondering whether I should throw this coin into the river or not."

"You're not serious, are you, Bhagya?" she said through a smile.

Bhagyanathan then told her the whole story. The girl listened to him intently and laughed. "Don't throw the coin. What your mother really intended was, you should not spend the rupee for yourself. Take it back to her."

"And how shall I buy five items with one rupee?" asked Bhagya with a quizzical look.

Now Bhageerathi laughed aloud. "Bhagya, you're really stupid. What your mother wanted was a watermelon; it has something to eat, drink, plant, grow, and some food for your cow!"

"I never realised that, Bhageerathi," said Bhagya, as he got up from the rock.

"Come on, I'll choose for you a nice juicy watermelon," said the girl.

Later, when he handed the watermelon to his mother, she ran to her husband. "See that! Our Bhagya is not stupid, he has become clever!"

"Call him here," demanded the merchant.

He asked him, "I'm sure you wouldn't have thought about the watermelon. Somebody else must have advised you. Who was it?"

Bhagya thought, he must be honest with him. "It was Hari's sister, Bhageerathi."

"Oh! Our priest's daughter! She's really intelligent. And what more did she advise you?" questioned the merchant.

"Not to throw the coin into the river," answered Bhagya. "Here it is." He took it out of his pocket and gave it to his father.

After Bhagya had left the room, the merchant turned to his wife. "We've found the bride for Bhagya!"

"You mean the priest's daughter?" said the woman as if she wanted confirmation.



"Who else?" said the merchant. "She is quite clever and intelligent. She will look after our Bhagya."

Both Bhagya's mother and father met the priest and his wife, who formally accepted the proposal.

A day after their marriage, Bhagya was reluctant to leave home for the shop. But Bhageerathi insisted on his accompanying his father. At the shop, the merchant found him restless. For once he became indulgent and told his son he could go home if he so wished.

A week later, as was the custom, Bhagya took his wife to her parents for a short stay. The next day, he spent the whole day in the shop and his father was very happy. He decided that Bhagya should be given an opportunity to show his mettle.

While in the shop the next day, the merchant suggested that Bhagya should go to the neighbouring town and choose some merchandise for sale in the village. He told him he would give him money and send a servant along with him. He also told Bhagya that he could stay overnight in the town and return only the following day.

Accordingly, Bhagya and the servant started the next day in a horse-drawn cart. They reached the town late in

the afternoon and sent back the cart. The two went round the market and bargained for some items. After promising to pay for them the next day, they went in search of a lodging place. They found one whose owner was a young lady.

As she served food to Bhagya and the servant, she mentioned of an opportunity to gamble. After all, being an up-and-coming merchant, Bhagya might wish to come by some extra money. The game began under a faint light. She allowed Bhagya to win the first two games and that made Bhagya over-confident of himself. He conceded the next game to the lady. He thought he was about to win the fourth game when the lady's pet cat toppled the lamp and she took time to lit it again. Fortune seemed to have changed course and the lady won. In the midst of fluctuating fortunes, the cat toppled the lamp again and again, and every time the lamp went out, the game went in favour of the lady. Bhagya was oblivious of the fact that the cat had been trained to perform his act on a signal from the lady. Bhagya played till he lost everything.

The next morning, the lady insisted that the servant went back to the village to fetch enough money to pay up all her dues. She asked Bhagya to help her in the garden and the kitchen till the servant returned with money.

Bhagya's parents were worried when there was no sign of him for two days. The servant reached the village on the third day, haggard and hungry.

Meanwhile, Bhageerathi who was waiting for Bhagya to bring her back, started on her own and reached Bhagya's house. She, too, listened to the servant's narration of what happened in the lodge and offered to go with him to bring back Bhagya. The girl disguised herself in a man's dress.

On reaching the town, the servant took her to the lodging house. Bhageerathi asked him to remain in the cart a little away from the place. As Bhagya had described to the servant how he had been cheated by the lady and her pet, Bhageerathi had taken with her a mouse. She hired a room and made it known that she was

interested in gambling. The landlady was overjoyed at the prospect of making money on the sly.

The game began and the visitor (Bhageerathi in disguise) appeared too clever for the landlady. But Bhageerathi was watching, and the moment the lady gave the signal to the cat, she released the mouse from the folds of her dress. The cat went after the mouse, and the woman lost. As the cat was not there to help her, the woman lost the games that followed, and Bhageerathi soon managed to collect a neat little pile of coins. Whatever Bhagyanathan had lost was thus retrieved.

The next morning, Bhageerathi excused herself and went over to the cart and handed the money to the servant and asked him to go and pay up the landlady and get Bhagya freed. The landlady readily accepted the money from the servant and decided to wait for the visitor to come back to get even with him. Bhagya was surprised to see his wife in the cart. The servant told him how they had planned his release. They all now went round the market, bought the items Bhagya had chosen a few days earlier, and started back for their village.

On seeing them, the merchant and his wife were immensely happy. He had only one comment to make after Bhageerathi recounted everything. "Bhagya will never change. But our wealth will be safe in the hands of our daughter-in-law!"





I married the first man I ever kissed. When I tell this to my children, they just about throw up.

- Barbara Bush

LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!



Ramu asked his wife Reena, "Where do you want to go for our anniversary?"

Reena : "Some place I have never been to."

Ramu said : "How about the kitchen?"



Two friends were seriously discussing....

"Yes, I came face to face with a lion once. And as luck would have it, I was alone and without a gun."

"What did you do?"

"What could I do?"

"First I tried to look straight into his eyes but he slowly came towards me. I moved back, but he kept coming nearer. I had to think fast."

"How did you get away?"

"I just left him and moved on to another cage."

"Is your mother home?" the salesman asked a small boy sitting on the steps in front of a house.

"Yes, she's home," the boy said, scooting over to let him pass.

The salesman rang the doorbell, got no response, knocked once, then again. Still no one came to the door.

Turning to the boy, the fellow said, "I thought you said your mother was home."

The kid replied, "She is; but this isn't where I live."



Dushtu Dattu

Dattu is at a friend's birthday party.



Just as the hostess is turning away...



READ AND REACT

A NOVEL CONTEST FOR READERS CASH PRIZE OF RS. 250 FOR THE BEST ENTRY

Read the story below:

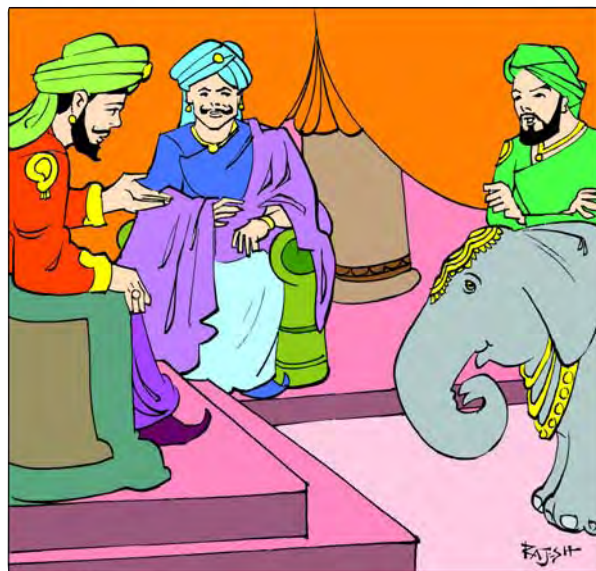
Chandan Singh and Mohan Singh were neighbours. The former was a poor farmer, while the latter was a wealthy landlord. One day, Chandan Singh saw that a huge pumpkin had grown in his field. He took it to the palace and made a gift of it to the king. The courtiers hailed Chandan Singh for his achievement and suggested that he should be suitably rewarded. The king gave him a hundred gold coins.

When Mohan Singh came to know about this, he wondered: If an elephantine pumpkin could earn a reward of a hundred gold coins, couldn't he expect a thousand coins if he were to present an elephant

itself to the king? Mohan went and bought a baby elephant at a high price, led it to the palace and gifted it to the king. The courtiers were silent. "How do I reward this fellow?" asked the king of his minister.

- ◆ What do you think would have been the minister's reply?
- ◆ And how did the king comply?

Write down your answer in not more than 150 words, give a title to your entry, and mail it to us along with the coupon below in an envelope marked "Read and React".



CLOSING DATE : February 28, 2005

Name -----Age-----Date of birth-----

School -----Class-----

Home address-----

-----PIN code-----

Parent's signature

Participant's signature

CHANDAMAMA INDIA LIMITED

82 Defence Officers Colony, Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097.

FALL OF THE MANCHUS

One of the basic rules of nature states: “Anything that goes up must come down.” The only exceptions are spaceships which travel beyond the earth’s gravity.

The Manchus, who reigned in China for over 250 years, assumed they would stay in power forever. That was no to be. The inevitable fall came in 1912.

The Manchus (the name tells us that they originally came from Manchuria) were themselves largely responsible for weakening their power.

Since they gathered the reins of power, the Emperor and his henchmen kept themselves aloof. The Manchus were appointed to important posts in the administration. They enjoyed the benefits of power and authority.

The Emperor told the Manchus not to forget their roots. He demanded that they retained their pride in their language and culture and also their racial purity. The Manchus were often reminded that they were god’s own men, born to rule. That mental attitude shaped itself into arrogance and over-confidence among the Manchus.

The vast majority of Chinese of other ethnic origins were kept at a distance, and denied their rightful place in

the management of the nation. The air of superiority the Manchus adopted was not dropped even while interacting with the envoys of nations like England, France, Germany, Russia or the United States of America.

This policy isolated the Manchus from the people over whom they exercised power and alienated the foreigners. Yet the policy did not run into serious trouble so long as the vast majority of people remained illiterate and ignorant. They stayed in remote areas where even in normal times the hold of the central government was none too evident.

The first signs of a change became visible when

western missionaries spread out to remote areas, taking the benefits of health care and education to the people. The development of better and quicker communication through rail links and telegraph lines brought about a sea change. No longer could regional discontent be contained.

This ‘nose in the air’ policy received a rude shock in 1894. Trouble broke out when China, steeped in the belief that Korea was its colony (Japan always questioned that right), sent forces to quell a revolt by the Koreans and ran headlong into a confrontation with Japan. The



THIS HAPPENED IN FEBRUARY

defeat of China came a rude shock. Japan claimed huge sums as indemnity.

China had no means of paying reparation. Funds were promised by various nations, but the offers came with price tags. In 1895, Russia secured the right to lay the Trans-Siberian Rail line across Manchuria. They staked the claim and snatched Kiaochow Bay in Shantung from the Germans to whom the Manchus had granted it. Britain acquired its share of holding; so did France.

The Emperor's power began to wane. The educated people, including Sun Yat-sen, saw in the changing scenario the beginning of the end of the none-too popular Manchu Empire. Some of the advisers of the Emperor tried to stem the rot in 1898.

The government decided to modernize education, raise a national army and train the forces in western military warfare. The regime offered to make the selection to the civil service more competitive. But what the reforms offered were too little, and came far too late.

Even this belated and trifling attempt to reform came a cropper due to opposition from within the royal family. The Empress Dowager (the widow of the previous emperor) stepped in and forced the reform movement to be aborted.

Many advocates of reforms were executed. Many more were sent to prison. The Emperor, young and inexperienced, was reduced to a figurehead.

Many youngsters were told that all the trouble that China faced came from the rapacity of the foreigners. They were lapping up the fat of the land. "Throw them out!" became the call of the people. Sun Yat-sen, a qualified doctor, tried to whip up a rebellion in Canton in 1895, but failed. He sought safety in exile. But he did not forget China. He built a network through which he encouraged the young in China to strike at the regime

and to press for reforms and also to curb the growing influence of foreign nations.

This led, in 1898, to the rise of Boxers (Righteous Harmony Bands), who targeted the foreigners, bringing in its wake retribution from Britain, France and Japan. The Boxer movement was quelled, but not the anger of the people.

Sun Yat-sen kept the fire burning. The young demanded constitutional reforms. Western democracy provided the model. The death of the Emperor and the Dowager in November 1908 provided the right time to strike. The heir was a baby of hardly three years. His uncle became the regent, but regency regime, even in the best of times, is weak and fragile. So it was in this instance, too.

The Constitutional reforms could not be delayed. The regime promised a national assembly with 50 per cent seats to elected representatives and the rest to royal nominees. The people wanted absolute legislative powers.

The regime was on the defensive. Sun Yat-sen realized that the time to dare had come. He returned to China in 1911, organized resistance to the regime and felt happy when the people, from all walks of life joined hands to overthrow the regime.

The mutineers soon gained control over large areas of China. The regency offered sops, but the mob went for the kill. On February 12, 1912, the boy emperor abdicated, marking the fall of the Manchu dynasty.

- By R.K.Murthi

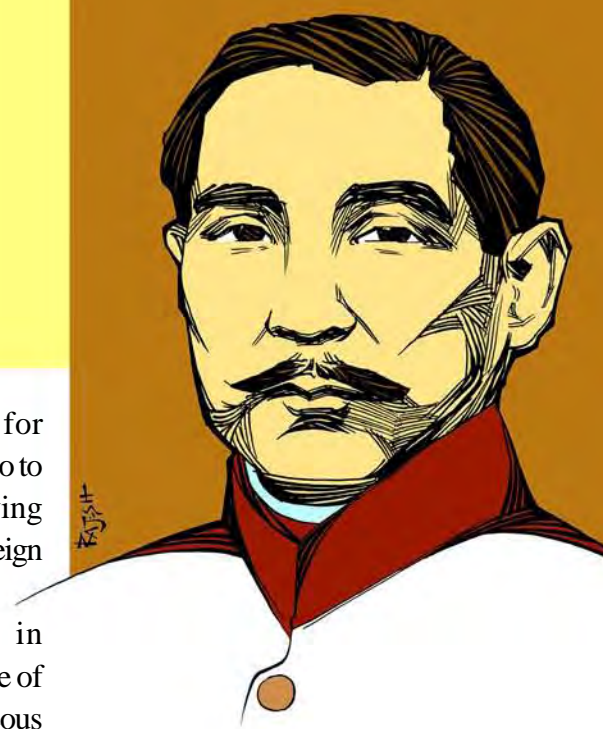




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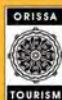
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THE SWEET SOUND OF SILENCE

Veena is not well. The whole night, she has been tossing and turning in bed, unable to sleep because of the pain caused by an ear infection. It is only in the early hours of the morning that the medicines began to take effect and she falls into an exhausted sleep.

Suddenly...

PEEEEEEM!

PEEM-PEEEEEEM!

PEEM-PEEM! PEEM-PEEM!

The loud noise of a car horn shatters the silence. Veena is startled awake. For a moment, she's too shocked to understand what has happened. Her heart is beating fast and she is also breathing fast. Her ear begins aching all over again.

"It's only a car horn, dear," says her mother, entering the room and peeping out of the window. "It's the car come to pick up Uncle Naresh, next door, for his 7 a.m. shift - he uses a car pool, you remember?"

But Veena can't remember anything else at that moment, except the pain and irritation she is experiencing after having been jolted out of her sleep when she is so ill!

"Why is that car driver so selfish and rude, Mummy?" she asks much later, when she is better. "Why did he have to sound the horn so loudly, waking me up and disturbing the whole neighbourhood?"

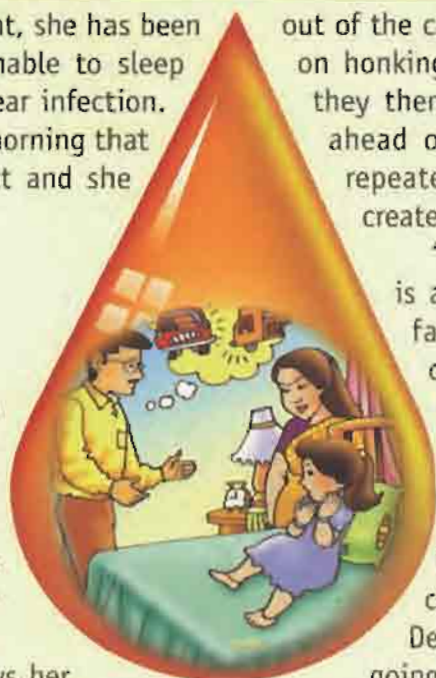
Her mother sighs. "Some people are like that, dear," she says. "They can't take the trouble to get

out of the car to call someone - so they just go on honking loudly till the person comes out; they themselves get irritated by the traffic ahead of them - so they go on honking repeatedly. They misuse their horns and create noise pollution."

"Did you know that using loud horns is a punishable offence?" asks Veena's father, who is listening to the conversation. "In the city limits, the permissible noise limit from horns is 91 decibels. Air horns are forbidden within city limits. But many heavy vehicles break the rules but get away with it. Although many cases are booked by the Transport Department, there are so many more going unpunished, and the result is the ever-increasing noise levels."

"It is a very real problem," says Veena's mother. "Noise pollution can cause loss of hearing, vomiting, high BP and heart problems. Remember the effect the horn had on you when you were ill, Veena? Now just think of what happens when horns blare near a hospital; how would the patients feel?" Veena shudders.

"The only way out of this is for drivers to become more sensitive to the problems of others," says her father. "While at the wheel, all of us should be patient enough to wait for the vehicle in front to move before blowing the horn; we should remember that other vehicles are also waiting behind us."



NO UNNECESSARY HONKING PLEASE



- It causes noise pollution
- It is injurious to health
- It creates tension for others



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